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VOL. XIV. No. 1

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## EDITORIALLY WE SAY

THIS issue of THE HIGH SCHOOL THESPIAN inaugurates several changes in our editorial policy, based upon the results of a survey we conducted last spring among a representative group of our readers.

The survey revealed that the departments, *Broadway at a Glance*, *Motion Picture Appreciation*, *Radio Techniques*, and *Reviews of the Periodicals*, were not meeting the immediate needs of the majority of our dramatic directors. News concerning activities on Broadway can be easily obtained from a score of magazines and newspapers. Those teachers who engage in photoplay and radio study and activities felt that more adequate information may be secured from books and publications devoted entirely to these subjects. Apparently most high schools do not receive a number of publications large enough to enable them to take advantage of the assistance provided by a department devoted to reviews of the periodicals. Accordingly, these four departments have been discontinued for the present.

Because they are meeting the immediate needs of our teachers and directors, the departments, *Staging the High School Play*, *Exercises in Dramatics*, *The Technician's Roundtable*, and *What's New Among Books and Plays*, will be continued and, if the need arises, expanded as the season progresses. In response to popular request, a new department, *Exercises in Make-up*, has been added.

On this page appear the names of those who make up our Advisory Board of Editors. Miss Ommanney is the author of the popular textbook on dramatics, *The Stage and the School*. She is also the author of that valuable series of articles, "How to Teach High School Dramatics," which appeared in this magazine last season and which may now be obtained from us in mimeographed form. Major Mathers is the author of *A Syllabus for a Proposed Course in Dramatics at the High School Level* which was distributed free of charge last season to all schools affiliated with The National Thespian Society. Dr. Evans will be remembered for her effective work as chairman of the Committee on Secondary School Dramatics of The American Educational Theatre Association. Dr. Savage is a student of dramatics and the author of numerous plays staged by high schools. We feel that in these leaders we have the best minds available today in the field of school dramatics. Their knowledge and experience will prove invaluable in helping us give you, through the pages of this publication, the very best material and the most helpful advice and assistance.

# So You Are Going To Give a Play!

Being the ideas of two playwrights on what the Dramatics Director should demand of the plays selected for high school production.

by FLORENCE RYERSON and COLIN CLEMENTS

Authors of *Ever Since Eve*, *Angels Don't Marry*, *June Mad*, *Through the Night*, etc.

THIS is a red-letter day in the Clements family. For years we have been bursting with theories and boiling with convictions about what should and what should *not* go into a high school play. Now, at long last, we have been offered the opportunity of expressing those convictions before an ideal audience. Are we going to seize that opportunity? Don't be silly!

To begin with, let us suppose it is summer. Our dramatics director is sitting by a lake, by the sea, or, what is more likely this year, in his or her own back garden, thumbing over a year's accumulation of THE HIGH SCHOOL THESPIAN, a pile of dog-eared catalogues, and a litter of publishers' advertisements. From this mass of titles and synopses, he or she must select two or three plays which will make a well-balanced season for his or her classes.

(Suppose we drop this "he or she" business and settle on the masculine. All right, here goes.)

By what magic touchstone can our director discover whether this play or that is the one which will combine audience appeal with a maximum of instruction to his students, not only in drama, but also in that far more important subject—life?

The answer to this question is as broad and varied as our school system. It will depend, of course, in part, upon such material considerations as the size of the school stage, the nature of the community, and the number of students available for casting. But when these considerations have been satisfied, we believe there are certain basic standards which should be kept in mind.

First, let us take up Ye Editor's pet hobby—the question of producing the classics. We agree with him that it is an excellent idea to schedule one classic play a year, but only if the play is sure to be well done.

This may sound axiomatic, but the number of classics butchered in this country every year is appalling. We have, in our day, seen *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, and *Merry Wives of Windsor* produced so beautifully by amateurs that they were a delight to everyone, audience and cast alike. But we have also, alas, sat through productions of *Lazarus Laughed*, *Julius Caesar*, and *Aglavaine and Selysette*, when death would have been a welcome release, and the death of the cast, *en*

*masse*, with the director on top of the funeral pyre, even more welcome.

The classics are no temptation to some directors. They can take them or leave them alone. But others should guard against that craving. Because a play is well beloved, he is apt to produce it with the argument that it will be good for the students to play in it, even though they do it badly.

It is our belief that nothing is worse for the human soul than to be allowed to do a play badly. Entirely forgetting the audience (which, being made up of mothers, fathers, Aunt Carrie, and all the girls who feel they should have been cast as Juliet,

ONE hour with our President has lifted my spirits and refreshed me with new hope. He has made me see that this war, which seems so final to us now, is but one small pattern in a vast tapestry of struggle. Since the dawn of history, there have always been tyrants, great and small, who siezed upon and enslaved their fellow men. But equally always, there have been noble souls who bravely and gladly gave their lives for the eternal right of man to liberty. The hope of today lies in this: That we, as a people, are no longer willing to accept these tyrants, and the world they make, without question. We are learning that a world which holds happiness for some, but wretchedness for others, cannot endure. That so long as one fellow creature is enslaved we, ourselves, are in danger of enslavement. So long as we suffer poverty to exist, children to die of hunger and disease, just so long are our own children in danger of poverty, hunger and death.

(She hesitates. Calvin steps up. She rests her hand on his shoulder.)

That is our hope. Our danger is this: When the conflict is finished and war-weariness has set in, we may be tempted to forget, to slip back into the old ways. Then, and then only, will our boys have died in vain. Then will the battle have to be fought again and, perhaps, yet again. A day will come when all, all will be gone. All who raged, all who threatened, all the weaklings who yielded, sold their country for a mess of pottage, all the men who, like our President, stood and bore infamy and scorn for the truth. Life will be over, but eternity will never efface from our souls whether we did well or ill. Whether we fought bravely or failed like cowards. It is for us to decide whether, at the end, we may say, with truth, "I have fought the good fight . . . I have kept the faith."

(She pauses, then ends softly:)

For mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord. . . .

(Final speech from the new Florence Ryerson-Colin Clements play, *HARRIET*, which is soon to be produced, for the first time in any theatre, by Sawyer Falk at Syracuse University.)

is probably not entitled to consideration, anyway), it is unfair to put a student through weeks of drill in a part which is beyond his powers. Also, it is only too likely to leave him with a deep and abiding hatred for a great work of art.

With all this in mind, let us suppose our director has soberly and prayerfully chosen *As You Like It*, or *Master Patelin*, or *She Stoops to Conquer* for one of his productions. What standard shall he use in selecting his modern play?

Here we find ourselves with such firm, we might say *violent*, convictions that it is difficult to be temperate in putting them down on paper. Perhaps the simplest thing would be for us to give at least part of our Taboo List—the "Do's and Don't's" we have established for ourselves after many years of studying, writing, and producing plays and films for adolescents.

First, in point of time, if not of importance, comes the question of subject matter. The plot should be of a type which will interest young people. It should deal with the problems which they are facing to-day, or which they will be forced to face tomorrow. Furthermore, this plot should be approached from their own point of view, with sympathy, understanding, and plenty of humor.

When we first started writing about young people, we were warned we would come to grief. Boys and girls, we were told, had no sense of humor about themselves. They would refuse to laugh at their own foibles. We have found this delightfully untrue. Young people not only laugh at their prototypes on the stage, they often come to us with ideas for comedy which are far keener than anything we could devise for ourselves.

Perhaps there is a tendency for the boys to laugh at the girls, and the girls to laugh at the boys, but it is good-natured laughter and helps enormously in the harmonious production of a play.

Next on our list we find the stern admonition: "All parts well-rounded. NO STARS." This does not mean that some parts will not be better than others; but it does mean that no one character must be allowed to dominate the play. If one part is unduly brilliant, the rest of the cast will often lose interest in the production. Our rule in writing is to make sure that every actor, no matter how small his role may be, has at least one good bit, the sort of scene which makes it possible for Aunt Carrie to say afterwards, "My! I thought you were simply wonderful where you sat on that apple pie! The man behind me said it was the best thing in the play."

Again consulting our Taboos, we find the cryptic phrase, "No Villains." This, of course, does not apply to the mystery play, which is a law unto itself. In the case of the family comedy, or the play built around a school situation, we feel that no character should be unpleasant enough to leave a disagreeable impression upon the audience. The character who



Florence Ryerson and Colin Clements (Mr. and Mrs. Clements) writing *Ever Since Eve*, most popular Thespian play of the 1941-42 season.

## The People of the Theater— At War!

by GARRETT H. LEVERTON

IN times of war, the people of the theatre must undertake to play one of their most important and responsible roles. Any hope of ultimate victory is greatly conditioned by the ability of the people to carry on in spite of the terrible toll exacted of us in "blood, sweat, and tears." This job of keeping high the morale and fighting spirit of both soldier and civilian is the responsibility of the theatre. Whether Broadway, Hollywood, Radio or Amateur, the job we must do is the same for all—to entertain, to inspire, to preserve the ability to laugh in the face of misfortune, to forget, for a moment, the hardships and sorrows in order that we may return to the attack with renewed vigor.

But even more important is our responsibility to use the theatre as a means of keeping in sharp focus, before its audiences, all those indigenous and idiomatic facets of the American tradition which, taken as a whole, comprise the American way of living and the principles for which we are fighting. Lewis Mumford, in the *Saturday Review of Literature*, states that "it is only by drawing on the roots of American culture that we shall gather the toughness and courage and self-confidence that will enable us to live through the menacing days that lie ahead." Even a casual consideration of the American tradition reveals an amazing saga of expansion, discovery, industrial development, and creative achievement. As a people we are a composite of Paul Revere, Ichabod Crane, Benjamin Franklin, Abraham Lincoln, Daniel Boone, Uncle Tom, Buffalo Bill, Thomas Edison, Freckles, and Huckleberry Finn. Peter Rabbit, Little Orphan Annie, and Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch are just as symbolic of our way of life as Nantucket's clipper ships and the prairie schooners of the Oregon trail. Fighting side by side, a mighty nation has been built by the Yankee, the cowboy, the immigrant, the Tennessee mountaineer, the prairie farmer, and a score of other divergent types, but all of them, however, united in one common belief in the sanctity of the freedom of the individual. Out of this epic background of history and legend has come our literature, much of which has been in dramatic form and has thus preserved for us those American characteristics, qualities, adventures and personalities which combine to make us more acutely aware of the ideals for which we now fight and give our lives. Now more than ever before, the people of the theatre must use the stage and the drama to keep our great tradition alive and dynamic until victory shall be won.

makes all the trouble, what film writers call the "menace," must have his own point of view—which the audience should be able to understand, even though it can not approve. In the end, this character should either see the error of his ways and redeem himself, or fall into some comedy situation which takes the curse off his villainy by resolving it into laughter.

As a sub-head under "No Villains" we find "No Demon Teachers." This is a delicate subject in present company, but we have a theory that it is a mistake to draw teachers who are unduly disagreeable. They may be humanly irritating and irritated, normally severe or mistaken in their judgments, but the cross and unfair teacher has no more place in the school play than he has in the school system.

And now, finally, we come to the strongest, the most sincere of our convictions—the one which is really the basis for all our high school playwriting—the necessity for a sympathetic portrayal of American family life. Since two thirds of the plays selected deal with the family, this is of the greatest importance. We honestly feel that no play should be produced which does not picture a pleasant, likeable family with a healthy and constructive outlook on the world.

We know there is no danger of the director selecting a play which is profane or obscene, yet we sometimes wonder whether a play in which the young people of high school age are permitted to spend weeks in the bosom of a family where the father snaps and snarls, the mother nags or whines, the children grumble and quarrel, will not work more havoc on their characters than any amount of licentiousness.

On the other hand, the same weeks spent in a family where the parents' love for each other and for their children is

tempered by common sense and gentle humor, where the children argue and tease, even bicker at times, but always with a feeling of warm affection underlying surface misunderstandings, is a lesson in the art of living which will never be lost.

That happy families are popular with audiences is proven by the perennial successes of such plays as *You Can't Take It With You*, *Little Women*, and *Skidding*. That the students appreciate them, we have learned through the many young people who have come to us after playing in our own plays of family life, *June Mad* and *Ever Since Eve*, and said, "When I have a family of my own I hope we will be just like 'the Woods,' or 'the Clovers,' as the case may be. One wistful little girl even remarked, 'If my parents talked to each other like Penny Wood's mother and father I'd love to go home.'"

Summing it up briefly: the dramatics director has the right to demand that the play he selects be competently written, on a subject adult enough to have substance, yet youthful enough to be of interest to his students; that it have a well balanced cast; that it concern people who are at the least pleasant to associate with, at the best, an inspiration to the young actors.

(A second article by Florence Ryerson and Colin Clements will appear in a later issue.—Ed.)

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# The High School Actor-His Heritage

(Primarily for Students)

by ERNA KRUCKEMEYER

Director of Dramatics and Thespian Troupe Sponsor, Hughes High School, Cincinnati, Ohio.

**D**ID you ever look up the verb "to act" in the dictionary? One of the definitions is "to perform on the stage." As we trace the story of the actor from its beginnings in ancient Athens, we find that the manner of performance changed considerably from country to country and from age to age. We are also made to realize that each contributed something and that these contributions finally make up the sum total of what we mean by acting today. It is a fascinating story. I shall try to tell it to you in this article.

## The Actor in Ancient Greece

**I**T is difficult for us to project ourselves back for seven centuries, isn't it? But way back there in ancient Athens the first actor was born. His name most likely was Thespis and he came into being, because the Greeks had a sense of the dramatic which demanded something more than a processional with chorus for their religious festivals. In order to understand the actor's job at this early period, to realize why he was so different from the actor of today, it is necessary to recall a few facts. In the first place, the audience was huge. It was estimated at 17,000, comprising practically the whole state. To accommodate this through a vast amphitheatre was needed, and to reach every person in that great audience was the actor's chief business. Thomas Wood Stevens in his interesting book, *From Athens to Broadway*, says, "it required a man of triumphant gestures and almost incredible power of voice." This is especially true when we remember that the chief interest of this crowd was in the line of the play, in the lofty poetry which has kept those early dramas alive through the centuries and still places them among the aristocrats of literature.

Moreover these early plays were based on mythology and every one in that crowd of listeners was as familiar with the facts as you and I would be with the stories of the Bible. For this reason the actor had to be a person of intelligent understanding. Woe to him if he gave a wrong interpretation to the text.

The physical fact of the distance between the actor and his audience is perhaps the main reason why some of the other fine elements of good acting are not in evidence at this period. To overcome this difficulty, everything possible was done to magnify the persons of the actors. They wore masks to emphasize the lines of the face; built high clogs into their sandals to increase their height; and padded the rest of their body in proportion. Finally an actor in the early Greek period did not concentrate on one role, but one

**T**HIS is the first of a series of seven articles covering the broad subject, "Getting the High School Actor to Act," written by Miss Kruckemeyer. The titles of the other six articles, listed in the order in which they will be published, are as follows: "Backgrounds and Benefits for the High School Actor," "She Speaks Yet She Says Nothing," "The Actor Asks, What Shall I Do?," "The Character Talks and Listens," "The Character Becomes a Person" and "Ready, Curtain!"

We feel this series of articles is particularly well suited for study and discussion during drama club meetings. Here is material that will stimulate and enrich your meetings.

Miss Kruckemeyer is a dramatics teacher and director with years of experience behind her. She is the author of several plays, including published adaptations of *Cyrano de Bergerac* and Shakespeare's *Henry IV, Part I*, *Part II*, and *Henry V* (published by The Dramatic Publishing Company under the title *A Merry Prince*.) Miss Kruckemeyer is widely known for the excellence of her stage productions and for her work in the interest of higher standards of play selection for the high school theatre.—Ed.

person usually played three or four parts in one play, and very often three plays were put on in one day.

Summarizing then, we conclude that the great contributions of Thespis, our first actor, to the story of acting was an understanding of lofty poetry, clear diction, and a beautiful carrying voice, powerful to convey the lines to his great audience. And may I suggest that next time you are in the library, you take a look at the translation of a Greek play? *Antigone* will interest you. A glance at the cast will tell you that there are messengers and a chorus, and if you take a moment more to browse through the play, you will notice the long speeches and will form some idea of the beauty of the poetry.

## The Actor in Ancient Rome

**T**HE literary record of Roman drama is very limited. The best known plays are the comedies of Plautus and Terence. When we think of the love of the Romans for the Circus and its gladiatorial shows, it is not difficult to understand that they had no real interest in tragedy. What they wanted was entertainment and something that appealed primarily to the eye, as pantomime, acrobatic skill and broad caricature. In connection with these was dialogue—impromptu, at that—with no pretense at binding it into the form of a play. In short, the actor in Rome for the most part, was an entertainer bent on making his audience laugh; while the Greek Thespian was in the last analysis and also, for the most part, an interpreter of religion.

## The Commedia dell' Arte

**I**N the later Greek period there had appeared a type of low comedy sketch in which the actor was known as a "mime". It was clever, but vulgar. This appealed to the Romans, and it is interesting to note that in the little town of Atella in Italy, the village actors took to this form and developed their own versions of comic type characters. These became a definite part of the Roman theatre. Later because of the custom of throwing Christians to the lions, i. e., making a show of martyrdom, the theatre fell into disrepute. However, it was from these mimes that a great many students of the theatre think that very important chapter in the story of the actor known as the *Commedia dell' Arte* developed at a later period in Italy and spread over Europe, principally in France and Spain. So we see that after all the contribution of the Romans was a very important one, particularly for its emphasis on pantomime.

When we think of the *Commedia dell' Arte* such names as Harlequin, Pantaloon, and Columbine come in mind. Once an actor was known as one of these, he never changed. I mean to say that an actor in the *Commedia* played only one role in his whole career. Barrie has written a little one act called *Pantaloon*, in which he shows how devoted these medieval actors were not only to their art, but each to his own particular part. The main requirements of this kind of acting were, first and foremost, skill at impromptu dialogue and improvisation, and deftness at expressing thought in action, dancing, and even acrobatic tumbling. Since each actor played only one role he developed a peculiar costume, gesture, and movement, even characteristic entrances and exits. The plots for this kind of entertainment were outlined and posted by the director so that all members of the company could become familiar with them. Each actor then made up his own dialogue and stage business, the main object being to create laughter. This gave the individual actor the opportunity, by his cleverness and mirth-provoking antics, to build up a huge following. Although it was a movement that sprang originally from the people, it gradually by its verve and spontaneity, attracted the cultured class. In this way literary influence and prosperity changed the character of the performances. After about 200 years it was celebrated throughout Europe, reaching the height of its fame about the end of the 17th century.

## The American Vaudeville

**Y**EARS later, the great, great, great grandchild of this movement was born, the American vaudeville. In that, as in its forebears, the actor, not the play, was the important thing. To emphasize this, the acting in vaudeville takes place on the apron of the stage, as near the footlights as possible. The actor makes no

attempt to give an illusion of reality, but works out his act with a great deal of movement, often resorting to acrobatic stunts. His make-up resembles a mask and the good vaudeville actor as the clever Harlequin or Columbine never steps out of character. Finally, he is in close touch with his audience, and to maintain this unity he is constantly changing his dialogue and action according to audience response. In short, he aims to please and to make his audience laugh. The most modern exponent of this school is Charlie Chaplin with his mask-like make-up, "his walk always the same and his tricks and situations never the same."

### The Actor in Shakespeare's Day

NOW that we see how the two great principles of acting came to life, the decks are cleared for the other points and what is more natural than to begin with the great bard of all time, William Shakespeare. For in his play, *Hamlet*, Act III, Scene 3, he gives advice that has been followed by all real actors ever since: "Speak the speech, I pray you, trippingly on the tongue . . . Use all gently . . . be not too tame neither . . . suit the action to the word and the word to the action," finally pleading with the actor NOT to play for the "unskillful, the groundlings, who are capable of (appreciating) nothing but dumb show and noise," but to the "judicious". In other words, he tells the actor that his diction must be good, that he must neither overact or "be too tame," that all action and all lines must be motivated, and that he must not play to the gallery as we say in modern parlance, but to people of intelligence and good taste. Then finally he sums it all up in the memorable phrase, "To hold, as it were, the mirror up to nature." And this has been the golden rule of acting ever since.

It is hardly probable that the actor in Shakespeare's own time achieved this ideal for we remember that women were not permitted on the stage at this time and it is difficult to believe that boys could have achieved any very high standard of realism in such exacting feminine roles as Lady Macbeth, Cleopatra, or Ophelia. One critic thinks that Shakespeare would not have continued writing these parts if his boys had not acquired a good deal of skill. However, it is safe to conclude that while drama had reached its peak, acting as an art still left much to be desired.

### The Actor in Moliere's Day

AN article in *Theatre Arts*, September, 1937, calls attention to the fact that Moliere, the great French actor and playwright, in his play, *L'Impromptu de Versailles*, portrays an actor manager advising his cast as follows: "Assume an air of quiet, of repose; a natural voice, and as few gestures as possible." How like Hamlet's advice to the players that sounds, doesn't it. Again in another play, *Les*



Scene from the one-act fantasy, *The Wonder Hat*, as staged by members of Thespian Troupe No. 225 at the Lincoln Community High School, Lincoln, Ill. Lloyd E. Roberts, director.

*Precieuses Ridicules*, he pokes fun at the actors of the day for pausing for applause after they have given a fine passage. "How can the people in the audience know a fine passage if the actor does not emphasize it and thereby indicate that a burst of applause is expected?" says Moliere. This bit of satire is a direct blow at what we today call exhibitionism, or acting for effect. It is easy to see that this habit was the natural result of the style of acting encouraged by the *Commedia*, and what we must not fail to see is that in its own field this style is correct and that neither Shakespeare nor Moliere are condemning the *Commedia* and vaudeville style as wrong, but are pointing the way to a different kind of acting. Strasburg in *Producing a Play*, by Gassner, quotes what was said of Baron, Moliere's great pupil: "He speaks and does not declaim; he always listens to his fellow actors, a thing to which actors as a rule pay little heed, and his attention is accompanied by such movements of the face and the body as are required by the nature of the speeches to which he listens. When speaking his talk is real conversation."

### The Actor in Eighteenth Century England

MR. MOORE in his interesting novel, *A Jessamy Bride*, tells an amusing story about David Garrick, the great actor of the 18th Century England. Dr. Samuel Johnson, the literary dictator of the period, refused to admit that acting was an art; in fact, he said that the actor was no better than the tight rope walker in a circus. The occasion was a meeting in one of the popular coffee houses of old London, of the famous literary group of

that time, which included Goldsmith, Sir Joshua Reynolds, the painter, and many other notables. Garrick knew it was useless to argue with Johnson, so he decided on another method of proving his point. He left the coffee house and in a short time returned as the uncle of Goldsmith and by his art succeeded in hiding completely his own identity and taking on that of another individual. And why this story? Because the next advance in acting was that of individual characterization and it was to a large extent the contribution of this same David Garrick. By "individual characterization" we mean that the actor remains true to nature but succeeds in giving an additional touch to the character that marks him as an individual, i. e., sets him apart from all other characters of that class. This led to what is known as the star system, now in vogue in the movies, in which the personality and genius of the actor is the attraction rather than the play as a whole. Although this seems to smack of exhibitionism, it should not be confused with that. For Garrick and all the great actors that followed him, did not seek to exhibit themselves but to lose their identity in that of the character they were portraying.

### The Actor Today

AFTER Garrick, there remained to be developed the recognition of the actor's relationship to the play, the acceptance that the PLAY and not the actor was "the thing." George Arliss in *Up from Bloomsbury* tells how he learned this lesson. It was at the very beginning of his career and he had been given a minor part, that of a policeman, I believe. Over-

(Continued on page 13)

# My Method of Directing Amateurs

(For Directors)

by SHIRLEY L. PRATT

Director of Dramatics and Thespian Troupe Sponsor, Webster Groves, Missouri, High School.

**D**RAMATICS at Webster Groves has a two-fold aim—that of developing poise and personality for every student and that of providing experience for the talented child which will help him in any phase of work he may choose to follow after leaving high school.

I believe that the high school production can be just as professional and polished in presentation as any college, little theatre, or Broadway production. I also believe that there is another purpose to high school dramatics which isn't at all concerned with the perfection of the production. That purpose is the provision of opportunities for every child in school to express himself creatively. It is the duty of the director to provide the opportunities and coordinate these two types of work so that the dramatics program is a unified whole.

It is also necessary to devise some means to prevent the educational program from suffering by comparison with the program of polished performances. At Webster Groves one way in which we try to achieve this balance between the two types of work is by offering an Advanced Dramatics Class. By the time the students enter Advanced Dramatics they are aware of their abilities and limitations. It is recognized that not all will be in a major play, but that everyone will perform at least once during the year unless the student objects. There are a few who enjoy stagecraft and do not care to act. Two students with cleft palates desired to take Advanced Dramatics for the fun they had in stagecraft. They did many pantomimes and silent roles, but could not speak well enough to be understood.

The Advanced Dramatics classes sometimes help in play selection although the director must plan a well-rounded program and reserves the right to make a choice suitable to the demands of the community when necessary. One student had been so impressed with *Elizabeth the Queen* during the summer of 1941 that enough pressure was brought to bear on the director by the student and all her friends that we chose to produce it, even though another play might have offered better opportunities to the students who desired to do *Elizabeth the Queen*.

As I see the creation of a play, it reminds me of the playing of a symphony. In a symphony every musician adds his skill and power to the might of the group—but this entire might is molded by the conductor into a unified whole—his interpretation of the score. In presenting a play, a script has been written. A direc-

## Methods of Directing Amateurs

**M**ISS PRATT'S article is the first of several articles on methods of directing amateurs, scheduled for publication this season. Each article will be the product of a different director, thereby bringing the views of several directors, all of whom are now actively engaged in dramatics work at the high school level. This series of articles is published in response to many requests received during the past two seasons.

Miss Pratt has already established for herself a wide reputation for her work in dramatics at the Webster Groves High School. Last season her list of major productions included *Suspect*, *Ever Since Eve*, and *Elizabeth the Queen*. She received her Master's Degree in Speech and Dramatics this past June from the University of Minnesota.—Ed.

tor reads it and visualizes an interpretation of that script which may be unique from any other interpretation ever given to the same piece. Every person who has anything to do with the production helps to create or destroy the unity of the interpretation.

Naturally, with this conception I believe in casting by the director. Each character must fit into the pattern of the entire production. Casting is one of the most important steps in the process of production. In order to avoid type casting and line readers without emotional power, I use a method of casting which places the emphasis on emotional expression and imagination. One or more characters are described briefly—using enough adjectives to make each character live, yet allowing the student with imagination to add to the description. A brief plot or exercise is stated. Each person who cares to try out does the exercise without script. All speeches are created by the actors during the exercise without previous preparation. This type of tryout enables a director to see who has emotional power and who has imagination. For the second step each student is asked to walk across stage in character. Sometimes actual reading from the play seems necessary. In this case, I usually choose a short selection and ask certain students to memorize the lines.

I never decide on one character until I can decide on them all. Sometimes one student could play three or four parts. One boy played the part of a 60 year old man in a play in which he could have done equally as well as a 45 year old man, but someone else could play the 45 year old part and not one seemed to be able

to play the older part. This same lad played Mr. Clover in *Ever Since Eve* because he wanted to—thought he would enjoy creating the character. He would have done an excellent job of Johnnie and could have had the part. He also could have played any one of four roles in *Elizabeth the Queen* (The Fool, Essex, Burghley, or Bacon).

Matters of height, physical appearance, etc., sometimes iron out when you withhold judgment until final tryouts are over. Of course you want the physical empathy to be as good as possible, but I would rather cast a student who would deliver the emotional qualities than one who would offer only physical attractiveness. In *Elizabeth the Queen*, our Essex might have been taller and more robust-looking, but no one else could bring the sheer beauty of speech, the depth of emotion and the sensitive interpretation to the part. The audience was so impressed with the interpretation that they forgot to criticize the fact that Essex was one of the shorter boys on stage.

It is also necessary to remember to use the more mature and older sounding actors in the older parts in a high school play since age becomes a matter of relativity on the high school stage.

These steps in casting are my version of a very excellent technique I learned from C. Lowell Lees at the University of Minnesota. The casting technique originally involved behind-a-curtain-emotion tests, memory tests, etc., to acquaint the director with the students. Since students in my classes have been studying with me a year or more, I have had ample opportunity to learn to know each student's capacities. Sometimes it is even possible to choose a show because I see so many of the characters walking about in dramatics classes.

Casting takes three days to a week. A notice stating the time of the first rehearsal and a list of the students who are to report is posted on the bulletin board after tryouts. At the first rehearsal we form a circle of chairs on the stage. No one knows the casting of the play until that first rehearsal when we read the play, pointing up the climaxes. At this time I give out a mimeographed rehearsal schedule stating the time of starting and stopping for every rehearsal for six weeks. A few comments on tardiness or absence from rehearsal are made. The charge is given—each student is to create his own character. Sources for character are mentioned. Everything is done to build a group spirit of cooperation and loyalty. Past experience has taught the group that the director means what she says about absence, tardiness, cooperation, and line memory. No matter how much I may feel it will hurt me personally, I do not allow anyone to stay in the cast who fails the group with tardiness, unexcused absence, or fails to memorize lines on time. Because the standard is high and everyone knows it, I have no trouble about these matters.



Act III from *Ever Since Eve*, a production of Thespian Troupe 106 of the Champaign, Ill., Senior High School. Miss Marion Stuart, director.

The second rehearsal is used to block out action. The director tells the actors how many steps to take, when and where to sit, leaving no detail for the actor to wonder about. The actor walks through the action, writes it in the margin of his script, and says the line. We go just as far in Act I as we can, stopping soon enough so that we can repeat what we have done once before the rehearsal period is over. As soon as all the action in Act One is blocked out, the cast begins to memorize Act I lines—not before. (Blocking out Act I may take a week, depending on the play). Thus the cast memorizes lines and action together. At the close of the first week, the director has a personal conference with each actor after which the actor is free to develop character in rehearsals. During this conference I ask each student to tell me all he knows about the character he is to portray. He builds, with the aid of my questions, a complete life story of this character. We try to understand the sides of the character that seemed most difficult to the student. We discuss walk, head posture, shoulder position, movement, bearing, etc. We decide where we can observe persons who might exhibit some of the characteristics typical of the character we wish to create. The student leaves the interview knowing how to build himself into the character he is to portray. For three weeks he will concentrate on building this character alone.

As the second and third weeks elapse, the entire action of the play is recorded in the actors' books and we concentrate on character. The director is constantly active, praising, spurring on, thinking of new suggestions to offer to help the actors find new business. The director sets the action and holds the cast to it. The actor may add any business and creates his own character. Just before dress rehearsal, the director begins to crystallize the characters. At this time a second conference is held with each actor. Now actor and director see eye to eye on what will make the best possible performance. The production staff reports for rehearsal, and organi-

zation occurs. The stage manager is given complete command back stage, and usually all runs smoothly. Due to splendid cooperation on the part of everyone, one of our scene shifts in *Elizabeth the Queen* was 30 seconds.

In summary then, the six weeks rehearsal period is divided into three parts.

### A Patriotic Pledge

**W**E, the students and faculty members of ——— High School and citizens of a Democracy, knowing that the immediate defense of the United States is the pre-eminent problem confronting the American way of life, do hereby pledge ourselves to engage in civilian defense efforts in the following ways:

1. To conserve school supplies and home supplies deemed vital by the authorities.
2. To take an active part in first aid work, in relief activities and in air raid drills.
3. To guard our own health in every manner so that we may not spread contagious diseases.
4. To be calm and co-operative during emergencies.
5. To bolster the morale of the armed forces.
6. To save money in order to purchase defense stamps and bonds.
7. To refrain from spreading rumors or disseminating valuable information.

However, we realize that the defense effort must not completely overshadow our education. Therefore we must add to our defense pledge the following promises:

1. To keep well informed about school and civic affairs.
2. To continue believing in higher education.
3. To practice democracy toward our fellow students and the teachers in our school.
4. To attain the highest character and scholastic records within our power.

This pledge has grown out of love for our country, confidence in ourselves as a nation, and belief in God.

—From The Association of Secondary School Principals, Washington, D. C.

First we learn the mechanical, physical part of the production—lines, action, etc., must be memorized perfectly. Secondly, we catch the emotional quality and create the character so that it lives. During this period the actor probably will over-act, but that can be corrected during the third period while under-acting can't be. The third period is devoted to toning down, crystallizing and polishing the production for performance.

During the six weeks visitors are rarely permitted at rehearsals because they frequently have been known to throw an actor off in his characterization by offering comments to the actor following the rehearsal. Only the director and actor should talk about the interpretation. I even insist that the actors themselves bring all comments they have about each other to me and let me decide whether or not to tell the actor involved. The director may be allowing over-acting during part of the rehearsal period knowing that at the psychologically correct moment the director will tone down the performance. An outsider, not understanding this, may make a remark which causes crystallization too soon and results in a stale performance. Visitors have also been known to make remarks which cause the actor to be self-conscious and stiff. Therefore I rarely permit visitors.

The day of the first performance arrives. Fifteen minutes before curtain everyone is ready and all gather on stage. The last fifteen minutes belong to the director. Usually I tell them the story of the play or set the atmosphere in some way. Formerly I asked them to tell that story to the audience. Lately students have asked me to use a phrase we used once in *Death Takes A Holiday*: "Remember, you are just as beautiful as you look and just as good as you think you are." With some such comment I leave back stage and take my seat in the back of the house.

After each performance we talk over what might have been improved—and usually it is improved before the next performance. Our custom is to talk over the last performance also because we know we can't ever do a perfect job and are going to profit from our errors and successes whether or not we are giving another performance.

We try to see that all of us who have had anything to do with a production have had an experience in creative expression. My personal reaction to this method of work is one of complete satisfaction. Personal experience has convinced me that it is far superior to other theories. Since studying this theory I have never told a student how to say a line or shown him how to do an action, but by proper questioning I am able to get him to do it the way that is best for him—and strangely enough, it is always right for the play, too.

If you are really interested in producing plays with vitality and life, study Stanislavsky's theories and creative dramatics.

# Great Plays of All Times

## PART 1—*Oedipus The King* and *The Frogs*

(Primarily for  
Students)

by BARNARD HEWITT

Chairman, Dramatics Committee, Brooklyn College, Brooklyn, N. Y.

### OEDIPUS THE KING

*Oedipus*: No loyal words thou speak'st, nor true to Thebes

Who reared thee, holding back this oracle.

*Teiresias*: I see thy lips speak words that profit not:

And lest I too a like fault should commit . . .

*Oedipus*: Now, by the Gods, unless thy reason fails,

Refuse us not, who all implore thy help.

*Teiresias*: Ah, Reason fails you all, but ne'er will I

Say what thou bidd'st, lest I thy troubles show.

*Oedipus*: What mean'st thou then? Thou know'st and

will not tell,

But will betray us, and the state destroy?

*Teiresias*: I will not pain myself nor thee. Why, then,

All vainly question? Thou shalt never know.

—From *Oedipus the King*.

Translated by E. H. Plumptre.

MOST of us, unfortunately, can know the great plays of the past only through books. The plays which have come down to us from Greece are given lip-service as masterpieces, but seldom receive the real tribute of production. *Oedipus the King* was produced in 1906 in Berlin by Max Reinhardt, a spectacular production in his Theatre of the Five Thousand, but I find no record at all of a professional production in this country. Although *Oedipus* was the first Greek play produced in this country (at Harvard in 1881), it has fared only a little better in the amateur theatre—twenty-one productions from 1881 to 1936.

To gain from the printed page some dim notion of the power this play had in the theatre, requires an effort of the imagination. We don't know exactly when *Oedipus the King* was first produced (there is some internal evidence which suggests the year 429 B. C.), but we can feel fairly certain that the place was the great Theatre of Dionysus at Athens, and the occasion the *City Dionysia*, the great spring festival in honor of the god Dionysus. It was a solemn and yet joyous occasion, in some ways like our own celebration of Easter.

We can to an extent project ourselves backward in time and imagine ourselves one of the great audience gathered for the premiere of *Oedipus*. We should in all probability have come early, and have groped our way in the dim light before dawn through the passage-way separating auditorium and scene house into the orchestra and thence up the sloping auditorium to our seats. We look down over the heads of other spectators on the great circle of the orchestra with the altar in the center, and across the orchestra we see the scene house, which as the light grows brighter we see has been built out in front to suggest the porch of a palace. We know that we are to see a new play by Sophocles, who is not only highly esteemed as a playwright, but is also highly respected as a citizen who has served his country as

### Great Plays of All Times

FOURTEEN of the world's greatest plays, from *Oedipus The King* by Sophocles to *Winterset* by Maxwell Anderson, have been chosen by Prof. Hewitt for a series of seven articles written primarily for the benefit of high school students. Two plays will be discussed in each article.

We offer these articles with the sincere hope they will furnish material which can be used for study and discussion in the classroom and in the dramatics club meetings. We suggest that the discussion begin with a report of the author's life and such other material concerning the play as may be appropriate. Of course, these articles are not offered as a substitute for the reading of the plays themselves. On the contrary they should lead students to the actual reading. The study might well end with a review of each play given before the class or club.

Prof. Hewitt will be remembered as the author of the series of articles on modern American stage designers published in this magazine last season. He is the author of the book, *Art and Craft of Play Production*, and is widely recognized for his work in the educational theatre.—Ed.

ambassador and soldier. We know the title of the play, and the main events of the *Oedipus* story on which it is based are familiar to us. Dawn breaks and we settle ourselves for the play. Through the same passageway by which we had entered the theatre, files a procession of priests and boys bearing olive and laurel branches. They perform to sad and ominous music a stately dance of lamentation, then throw themselves in attitudes of supplication before the altar. The great doors of the palace slowly open, and *Oedipus*, magnificent in kingly headdress and purple robes, strides forth. The play has begun. And what a play! Almost from the first words we are caught up in a net of suspense which tightens gradually about us until the intensity is almost more than we can bear.

If we leave this attempt to put ourselves in the place of a Greek witnessing the world premiere of *Oedipus the King*, and look today for the pattern of that play's suspense, we find it, perhaps somewhat to our surprise, in the mystery or detective story. *Oedipus* is constructed on the detective story pattern. Laius, former king of Thebes, was murdered, by person or persons unknown, and now his murderer must be discovered and punished if Thebes is to escape the terrible plague with which it is afflicted. Naturally, the role of detective devolves upon the present king, *Oedipus*. His is an almost impossible task. The circumstances of Laius' death were

never clear, and now they are further clouded by the years that have elapsed. *Oedipus* is in much the same situation as Hercule Poirot, faced with the necessity of solving a sixteen-year-old murder in Agatha Christie's *Murder in Retrospect*.

But if *Oedipus the King* is a detective story, it is no ordinary one, for the murderer, whom *Oedipus* seeks and to his horror finds, is *Oedipus* himself. He discovers not only that he himself killed Laius, but also that Laius was his father, and that Jocasta, whom he married when he ascended the throne of Thebes, is his mother. The audience knew all this from the beginning, so that the suspense, which in most detective stories arises from doubt as to the identity of the murderer, arises in this play from the awesome spectacle of a man driven step by step to uncover his own horrible deeds.

It is in this gradual unfolding and the tightening of suspense that Sophocles' dramatic skill is perhaps unsurpassed. The old blind seer, Teiresias, is summoned and questioned. He refuses to speak, until goaded by *Oedipus*' accusation that the seer himself is the murderer, he declares that *Oedipus* is the guilty man.

The play might have been over at this point, but Teiresias has no evidence, and *Oedipus* jumps to the conclusion that the seer has been bribed to slander him by Creon, Jocasta's brother. Defending her brother and reassuring *Oedipus*, Jocasta mentions that Laius was killed "where the three roads meet." The king's fears are roused, for he remembers that he had killed a man "where the three roads meet." When a messenger arrives to tell him that Polybus, king of Corinth, is dead, those fears are forgotten in the joy of his belief that now that his father has died a normal death he can never murder his father and marry his mother, as had been foretold. Scarcely has he savored this joy when the messenger tells him that he is not Polybus' son, as he has always believed, but a foundling rescued in infancy from death by exposure. At this point Jocasta guesses the truth and enters the palace to kill herself. Then comes the Shepherd who knows the whole truth. He is reluctant, but he is forced to speak, and the dreadful suspense is ended. *Oedipus* rushes madly into the palace to tear out his eyes in terrible self-punishment.

It may seem to us today that the punishment of *Oedipus* is out of all proportion to his crimes, which after all were committed unwittingly. But if we examine his behavior throughout the story, we find that though his intentions were good, he was rash and headstrong, and these traits rather than an iron-bound fate brought about his downfall. This and the sheer dramatic intensity of the play are perhaps the major reasons why Aristotle and many critics since have considered *Oedipus the King* one of the greatest of tragedies.

### THE FROGS

*Frogs*: Brekeke-kesh, koash, koash.  
Friends and Frogs, we must display



Scenes from the Greek tragedy, *Oedipus the King*, by Sophocles. Given by Eta Epsilon Cast of Alpha Psi Omega at Spring Hill College, Spring Hill, Ala.

All our powers of voice today;  
Suffer not this stranger here,  
With fastidious foreign ear,  
To confound us and abash.  
Brekeke-keesh, koash, koash.

Bacchus: Well, my spirit is not broke,  
If it's only for the joke,  
I'll outdo you with a croak.  
Here it goes—(very loud) "Koash, koash."  
—From *The Frogs*.

Translation by John Hookham Frere.

IF in Greek tragedy the gods are treated with an awe which seems strange to us, unused to religious plays, in Greek comedy they are treated with a lightness which seems sacrilegious. The principal character of Aristophanes' *The Frogs* is Bacchus or Dionysus, the very god in whose honor were held the great religious festivals at which both tragedy and comedy were produced. What kind of a fellow is Bacchus in *The Frogs*? He is somewhat effeminate (this is the youthful, not the paunchy middle-aged god), and he is an arrant coward, who tries to conceal his cowardice under a smoke-screen of boastful talk. Moreover, although he fancies himself clever, he is really very stupid, easily outwitted by his servant, Xanthias.

One can perhaps best get an idea of the effect of *The Frogs* by imagining a modern comedian in the leading part, and although there are a number who might give amusing performances as Bacchus, I think my choice would be Jack Benny.

Bacchus, dissatisfied with the state of the drama in Athens since the recent death of Euripides, resolves to descend to the infernal regions and bring that dramatist back with him. What more natural than that he should disguise himself as Hercules, the hero who had made the perilous trip unscathed? So we have the frail and effeminate Bacchus clad in the lion skin (oversize) and carrying awkwardly the huge club of Hercules. Imagine Jack Benny in that outfit: tickled by the fur, all but enveloped by it, tripping over a paw, trying without success to find an easy way of carrying the heavy club. And then his pitiful attempts to look and sound like Hercules!

What would not Benny do with the scene, which gives the play its name, in which Bacchus is forced to row Charon's boat across the river Styx! Unused to such exertion, he fumbles awkwardly with the oars, grumbles, curses, and cries out in pain, urged on by the grotesque Chorus of Frogs, which swarms about the boat and drives him nearly frantic with its croaking exhortation.

Arrived at last, he is set upon by Aeacus, judge of the dead, who has been waiting to get his vengeful hands upon the marauder, Hercules, who on his previous visit stole the watchdog, Cerberus. We

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have then a farcical sequence, which we can perhaps appreciate still better if we imagine it with Xanthias played by Rochester and Aeacus by Fred Allen. To escape punishment, Bacchus persuades Xanthias to trade costumes with him, but he is beaten anyhow and the scene reaches a hilarious climax when the false Hercules and the true Bacchus try to prove their respective divinity by showing themselves immune to pain under a beating administered impartially by Aeacus.

One might think from the foregoing that *The Frogs* is unadulterated farce, but the dialogue even of these slapstick scenes is barbed with thrusts at writers, educators and politicians of the day, and the latter half of the play is informed with definite satiric purpose. You will remember that Bacchus was seeking Euripides. He found him engaged in vulgar competition for the seat of honor at Pluto's table with the elder playwright, Aeschylus. The dead have taken sides, and to prevent public disorder a contest is arranged between the two tragic poets. Bacchus, whose identity has been vouched for by Pluto, is to be the judge. There follows a literary burlesque which reaches its climax when a huge pair of scales is brought forward and a line of verse by Euripides is weighed against a line by Aeschylus. When each has produced his weightiest lines, the scales and Bacchus decide in favor of Aeschylus.

It is impossible to find a modern parallel to the literary satire of *The Frogs* (no form of literature plays so important a part in our lives), but with the aid of a few "ifs" we can imagine one. Suppose that the authors of *Of Thee I Sing* seized upon a theme which had been formulated by some critics of our times, namely, that we are too soft to survive, that we have grown too ease-loving to defend democracy successfully against dictatorship. And suppose that Shakespeare had expressed in his plays the sturdy virtues deemed necessary for our salvation, while Eugene O'Neill had mirrored our decadence. Then Kaufman and Ryskind might compose a *Frogs* for our day in which the main action might be a literary contest between O'Neill and Shakespeare, the latter brought back from the grave to teach us how to save our way of life.

It is only through an appreciation of their comedy as well as their tragedy that we can understand something of the Greeks' accomplishment in the theatre. *The Frogs* and *Oedipus the King* together illustrate the richness of their dramatic creativeness.

# Selling Dramatics to Our School and Community

(For Directors)

by MARION V. BROWN

Director of Dramatics and Thespian Troupe Sponsor, Hazleton, Pa., Senior High School.



Miss Brown

IN the Hazleton Senior High School we are fortunate enough to have included in the regular course of study a class in Advanced Dramatics. Membership in this class is restricted to those students who have done outstanding work either in the elementary course in public speaking or in the activities of the Thespian-Playmaker Club. Because of the fact that the class is made up only of those students who are particularly interested in dramatics, many things can be done that could not be attempted if there were people in the class who were forced to be there.

This Advanced Dramatics Class is the backbone of the Thespian-Playmaker Club, for all officers of that club are members of the class and the ideas we want to get across in the club can be developed in the class. The class, too, aids in the weekly assembly program, preparation of which very frequently falls upon their shoulders. Time and again we are called upon by the clubs downtown to prepare a skit for advertising purposes. This gives the class practical applications of the principles that are studied in the class.

The Thespian-Playmaker Club with a membership of approximately two hundred and fifty is one of the most active clubs in the school. It meets regularly on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month and a planned program is followed. Because of the large membership we attempt to do as many things as possible so that the members will feel that they are really part of the club. Every member finds himself on the ticket committee for all of the public performances and he is made to feel that he is working for his play. The ticket committee itself is made up of fifteen students of the Advanced Dramatics Class. The membership is divided among these fifteen and a daily checkup on tickets sold is made possible through the cooperation of the office which permits the committee to check on their members during the homeroom periods.

Incidentally, much of the success of the Thespian-Playmaker Club and the Advanced Dramatics Class is due to the fact that the administration looks upon them

as decidedly worth while activities and does everything possible to assist in the smooth running of any project either undertakes.

The Thespian Club presents three major productions each year: one in November; one in February; one for the senior commencement play in June. In addition to these activities our schedule calls for the presentation of numerous one act plays through the operation of our Entertainment Bureau.

When I became director of dramatics at Hazleton High School, three years ago, Dr. S. P. Turnbach, principal of the school, suggested the idea of the bureau. Frequently he was called upon by downtown agencies for entertainment and since the requests usually came at the last minute, it was impossible to supply what was needed. We decided that we would try organizing for this kind of entertainment. We announced through the papers that any club or church desiring entertainment for any of its meetings should contact Dr. Turnbach or me. Then through the class and the club we got busy. We prepared a number of one act plays that could be presented if the need arose. This, of course, made it possible for me to use many more of my club members than I could possibly have used in just the major productions.

The response to our bureau was most gratifying. Last year, for example, we appeared before the following clubs:

## Selling Dramatics

**H**OW may we do a more effective job of selling dramatics to our school and community? That is a question which at one time or another confronts the dramatics director. Finding a satisfactory solution is often a most difficult task, particularly in those communities where the director must begin on the ground floor, so to speak, or where she must act with little support from a lukewarm administration.

Miss Brown's article is the first of a series we shall publish this season, designed to furnish, partially at least, some workable solutions to the question given above. The contributors of these articles are teachers of high school dramatics who enjoy the reputation of having succeeded in selling their dramatics programs. In these discussions will be found the means whereby other dramatics programs may be "sold" with equal effectiveness.

Miss Brown is a teacher of many years' experience. Her Entertainment Bureau is recognized as one of the outstanding services rendered by her school for the benefit of the entire community. Above everything else, Miss Brown is keenly interested in her work, enthusiastic about her program, and alert to the benefits students derive from dramatics. Perhaps in these qualities lies the reason why she has been successful in selling dramatics to her school and community.—Ed.

The Harlor Men's Club where we presented *The Pampered Darling*.

King's Daughters' Bible Class where we presented an evening of one-act plays including *The Boor*, *The Midnight Ghost* and *Madness in Triple Time*.

The Philathea Bible Class where we presented the Christmas play, *To Ellen, From Dad*.

St. John's P. M. Church where we gave an evening of one-act plays including: *The Pampered Darling*, *Antic Spring*, *Squaring It with the Boss*.

The Eastern Star for a Mother's Day play, *The Other Mother*.

The Trinity Lutheran Church (for its reception of new members) where we gave *The New Bride*.

The Mother's Day Banquet at the Grace Reformed Church—*Madness in Triple Time*.

The Emanuel's Reformed Church (reception for new members) *The New Bride*.

Mother's Day Banquet at the Emanuel's Reformed Church—*Ann Drives the Car* and *Madness in Triple Time*.

The Deisroth Social Club—*The New Bride*.

St. John's Lutheran Church—an evening of one-act plays; *The Boor*, *The New Bride* and *Madness in Triple Time*.

The Philathea Class Spring Banquet—*The New Bride*.

The Luther League of the Christ Lutheran Church had us do their three-act play for the building fund. We presented *The Mad March Heirs*.

As you can see from the above list, the Thespian-Playmaker Club was kept busy through the Entertainment Bureau. We adopted the plan of giving our services free if the organization was having just a social meeting. But if it was raising money through our appearance, then we charged a flat rate of five dollars no matter what we presented. In many instances we were pleasantly surprised following the performance by checks that we did not expect for the meeting had been purely social.

The Entertainment Bureau has kept the Thespian-Playmaker Club constantly before the public with the result that many people who never bothered attending our productions at school are now regular patrons. It has done much for the members, too, for they feel that even if they cannot get into the major productions then at least they can be active through the bureau.

In addition to the plays presented through the bureau and the three major productions we present each year, we stage the assembly frequently. In the fall we have a Thespian assembly and again in the spring we have our Thespian Day. The Advanced Dramatics Class always presents at least one assembly program itself as well as assisting in the presentation of a number of other assemblies.

We cooperate with the senior class in staging Senior Day in the fall and the senior farewell program in June; we work with the Music Department in presenting a Christmas Pageant and we are active in staging the Commencement Pageant.

In selling the dramatics program within the school we use the assembly as our most potent device. There we can actually show what we are doing. The public address system (the down payment inci-



Scene from *Jane Eyre* as produced by members of Thespian Troupe No. 257 at the Hazleton, Pa., Senior High School. Directed by Miss Marion V. Brown.

dentally was made from the Thespian Club's presentation of *The Laughing Dwarf*) is used, too, for announcing rehearsals of the various one-act plays that are being used for downtown; for making brief announcements on the major production that is in the process of being prepared; for committee meetings for the Thespian meetings and for numerous other details that keep the school and the members interested in what we are doing. Time and again I have had students stop me in the hall to question me about one of the plays that he heard mentioned over the system. They are always very much interested in what we are doing for the down-town agencies and if the public is invited to the meeting, we can be sure that many of our students will be among those present.

The Thespian-Playmaker Club at the present time is very well off financially. We closed our books last year with a balance of \$351. And all debts paid! We have equipped our stage crew workroom with a fine new electric saw; we bought our fireplace equipment because it's a nuisance to be obliged to borrow it every time we need it; we built a fine new set for our *Jane Eyre* production; we paid the initiation fee for all our new Thespians and we presented all our Thespians with the various pins that they had earned during the year. We did all these things last year and were still able to leave that substantial balance with which to begin the year 1942-43. I believe that shows how active the club has been and how hard everybody worked in order to make everything we attempted a financial, as well as an artistic, success.

As I mentioned before in this article many of the things we do would not be possible if we did not have the whole-hearted cooperation of the school officials. Everything that the office can do to assist me in the building up of this pro-

gram on which I am so definitely sold is done. My officers are given the sixth period of the day free so that they can work with me on the plans we have in mind; I am permitted to take anybody from study hall at any period of the day for Thespian activities; the officials themselves are always among the first to congratulate us on a successful achievement. This last may seem like a little thing, but when high school students feel that those in authority are interested enough in what they are doing to come to see them do it, they are willing to work twice as hard.

I have in the Hazleton High School two valuable assistants without whom I would be hindered greatly. Miss Jane E. Rich, a member of the English Department and Adviser of the Girls' Oratorical Club, is my permanent property chairman. She does so many things for us that we feel she is an important part of our organization.

Mr. Albert Saueracker is the faculty stage manager and through his resourcefulness we have built up a work room that is adequate enough to handle whatever production problems arise.

The stage crew is selected from boys who successfully pass the tests put up for them. In this way we are sure that we have on the crew those who are not only interested in the work but also capable of doing the work.

The faculty, with a few exceptions, recognizes the worth of the dramatics program and is always willing to cooperate with us in our various projects. We call upon Mr. George Shanno, head of the science department, to assist us in the business management of our productions. Working with him is a student committee, but Mr. Shanno gives much of his time to help us have a smoothly run business organization. For publicity, Miss Evelyn Lesser, a member of the English Department, and Miss Rebecca Boyle, adviser

of the school paper, direct the students who are handling the publicity. The Mountaineer, our school paper, carries items in every issue on the activities of the Thespian-Playmaker Club and builds up excellent publicity for all of our public performances.

Posters for advertising are made through the splendid cooperation of Misses Ruth Koch and Hazle Malkames of the Art Department who are never too busy to take time out for special advertising of our projects.

And when we need costumes we have only to go to Miss Conjetta Fescina and Miss Ida Crowe of the Home Economics Department.

The Music Department under the direction of Mr. George P. Schwartz, Mr. Donald Will, and Mr. Harry Schmitt does much to make our assembly programs and our public performances enjoyable. And last, but not least, the food used in all of the plays that require it is prepared by the cafeteria under the direction of Mrs. Elizabeth Moore.

In furthering the dramatics program we have had one aim in mind and that has been to make the program function as an important part of the school program. To do this we have been obliged to do as many things as possible to demonstrate concretely that we had something worth while to offer. We have also been obliged to make our members conscious of the fact that the club was their club and would be only as fine and as active as they made it. In building up their interest we have presented each year a resume of the year's work during the week that we designate as "Thespian Week." That week is something that serves as a goal for the year's work, for it gives the officers and the members the opportunity of showing that they can not only do as well as the group of the year before did, but that they can do even better.

Monday night of Thespian Week we have the election of officers for the next year. To be one of the Thespian officers now means a distinct honor for nobody is eligible for an office unless he has earned his six points of credit and has a scholastic record that is above the average.

Tuesday night is our formal initiation of new Thespians. We use the long ceremony and it certainly is a beautiful and impressive affair. We initiated forty Thespians this past year and every one was deeply impressed with the ceremony.

Wednesday night we have a down-town engagement. This year we gave an evening of one act plays for St. John's Lutheran Church.

Thursday night is our own Thespian banquet, the highlight of the year. We plan for that banquet very carefully and the students look forward to it with a great deal of pleasure.

The following day is Thespian Day at school and we award in assembly the pins earned by the various members.

(Primarily for  
Students)

# Fun in Dramatics

by FRED C. BLANCHARD

*Director of Dramatics, Woodrow Wilson Junior College, Chicago, Ill.*

**T**EXTBOOKS and teachers tell you a lot about the personal values to be gained by the participant in theatre activities. But there is no sense in going in for dramatics for what you can get out of it. It is gratifying to receive honors and incidental benefits, but the simple pleasure of participating must remain our principal reason for being Thespians. Material gain, for all you Thespians, is incidental, not fundamental. It is trite but true that the real amateur is in theatre purely for the love of it.

Now and then a high school or college dramatic star goes on with theatre work and becomes a professional, but for most of us, dramatics is an amateur activity which can give us pleasure through school days and later life as well. You can go on acting long after your football playing days are over. I once worked with an acting group composed, in part, of an engineer, a minister, an attorney, a newspaper editor, a few teachers, several housewives. None of them were paid, all of them were busy on other jobs. But they regularly produced a show a month during the winter season. There are hundreds of similar groups throughout the country. Amateurs in fact and spirit, they spend their spare time in the theatre simply because they have fun doing so.

Don't be afraid or ashamed of the term "amateur" either. An amateur is not necessarily a novice; he is just a person who acts for fun instead of money. An amateur play, as you well know, does not need to be a nightmare of missed cues, forgotten entrances, dropped properties, barn paint make-ups, and awkward antics. Though given for pleasure and not profit, it can have much of the skill and finish of professional drama. The new and exciting things in the theatre usually begin with the amateurs. In some of the greatest periods of theatrical history, the non-professionals have been in the driver's seat. Today, even with such commercial competition as the legitimate stage, the radio and the movies, the amateur theatre is more important than ever, as the activities of thousands of you Thespians show. And why are you a part of this great amateur theatre? Because you like it, of course.

Fun in dramatics? There's lots of it. In a well-run high school theatre there is plenty of hard work, but there's fun in this hard work, too. First, in the realization of a job well done. There's always pleasure in that, whether you are managing a school dance, making a radio set, playing a bang-up ball game, or putting on a play. Some of the early grinding tasks of rehearsal, like group business and line memorization, are fun if you regard them as challenging problems which demand

## What Dramatics Can Do For Me?

**W**HAT Dramatics Can Do For Me? That is the timely question which Prof. Blanchard will answer for the benefit of high school Thespians in a series of seven articles, the first of which appears on this page. Prof. Blanchard has been a student, teacher and director of dramatics for many years. And he has experienced the thrill of acting on the stage. That is why he is well qualified to speak to high school students in language they can easily understand.

Besides "Fun" in Dramatics, Prof. Blanchard will consider in forthcoming articles these other valuable contributions which students receive from participation in dramatics: Friendship, Training, Education, Appreciation, Service, and a Sense of Perfection. Here is truly a wealth of material suitable for study and discussion in the classroom and club.—Ed.

an accurate solution. The patient search for a satisfactory portrayal of your part, and finally that exciting day when you know that the part is coming to life, when you and your fellow actors and your director realize that your thinking and practice are getting results, when you at last become certain that you have created a character for the stage—one that is honest and sincere and satisfying—there's fun in that.

After a good many years of college theatre work, rehearsals are always a source of stimulation and pleasure to me—even the bad ones. It's never any trouble to get a real Thespian to rehearsal; he wants to be there. There is

## A Solemn Pledge

**A**S we enter upon a new school year, let us all reaffirm our pledge to go forward with our dramatics program; to give our boys and girls that training and experience which is rightfully theirs. As we enter the classroom each day, let us not forget that opportunities denied our children now are forever lost to them. The war crisis will call for the modification of many cherished plans. We must not use that as an excuse to do less. On the contrary, we must pledge ourselves to do more, for to us shall be given rare opportunities to make significant contributions to the war effort, giving further proof of the value and practical aspects of dramatics.

We shall have many opportunities to stage patriotic plays for the school and the community; we shall have the privilege of producing timely plays which will build and maintain morale and bring relaxation to our audiences from the strain of war-time activities. We shall have one chance after another to dramatize projects undertaken by the school in the interest of defense and conservation. These undertakings give the position of dramatics director new meaning. Ours is truly an enviable position. Let us be equal to the occasion, in resourcefulness, initiative and enthusiasm. To us is given the opportunity to show the operation of our educational process at its best, for the good of our children and for the good of the community and the nation.—Ed.

always some new pleasure in every rehearsal as the date of production approaches. One day lines are at last letter perfect, another day some bit of difficult business is accurately timed and performed. Understanding of the play develops, proper tempo is achieved, properties are used with confidence, the set is ready for use, the humor becomes less forced and strained. Each day of rehearsal, if everyone is working at full capacity, brings new results and new pleasures.

Dress rehearsals, for me, are just about as much fun as performances. A good dress rehearsal (and I hope you have several for each play) is like a test flight under actual conditions, with nothing left to chance and inspiration. You have everything together—sets, lights, properties, costumes. And how we like our costumes! When you were small children, you loved to "dress up," as society ladies, Indians, princesses, policemen. If truth be known, you haven't gotten over it yet—no actor does. Amateurs and professionals alike enjoy dressing the part. Especially in period plays, the outward garb helps to create the illusion that you are, for an hour or two, another person in another world. We like theatrical make-up, too. How many times have you heard people say, "I love the smell of grease paint?" You have probably said it yourself, and why not? That combination of odors of cold cream and grease paint, powder and spirit gum, so delightful to the nostrils of the Thespian, belongs to the theatre and the theatre alone. These things, too, are fun.

Need I recall for you the thrills of actual performance? The air of subdued excitement, the eager reading of programs, the last minute touches to make-up and costume, the repeated questions about the size of the audience, the call to "places"—are these not fondly familiar? Then, on stage just before the opening, the buzzing of the audience on the other side of the proscenium, the hot smell of the stage lights, the overture perhaps, the call of "Curtain!". And there you are, before the audience. You probably experience a little stage fright for a minute or two, but you find yourself saying your lines and doing your business as practiced. The audience becomes less restless, begins to follow the story, laughs at the jokes, gingerly at first and then with full-voiced enjoyment. That special delightful unity of audience and actor is taking place. You relax a bit, and are a better actor for it. You wonder why you were ever the least bit frightened. It's not so bad, is it? As a matter of fact, it's fun.

Then, as the play proceeds, you understand that your work has been fruitful, that all of you—actors, stage crew, costumers, property managers, business staff, director—have combined your talents and enthusiasm in a job worth doing. And the end result has been pleasure, pleasure for everyone on both sides of the foot-



Cast for the production of *What a Life*, all-school play at the Bloomsburg, Pa., High School (Thespian Troupe 158). Directed by Mrs. Harriet Kline.

lights, a particular kind of pleasure found only in the theatre, a pleasure that you would not readily give up for any other in the world.

There's no use pretending to disregard applause; actors like to know that they have pleased the audience. And there's just enough "ham" in all of us to respond to expressions of approval, manual or vocal. Susceptibility to praise is a very human quality, and even actors are people. If we are smart, we'll learn to accept criticisms as well as compliments. We must if we are to learn. But none of us will deny that applause and curtain calls are part of the fun.

All the fun does not go to the actors and actresses. I hope you are the kind of a Thespian who, having had the leading role in one play, is the first to volunteer for the technical staff of the next. If you are, you know the pleasure of work back stage. The stage crew is usually a lively, wise-cracking crowd, but one not afraid of hard labor and always anxious to perform its task smoothly and efficiently. I've never known a crew that failed to take a pride in its work, or failed to have a lot of fun in doing a good job.

The fun in dramatics is not over when the curtain has fallen on a play. The pleasures of recollection are almost as great as those of preparation and production. Those after-theatre parties during which the play is lived over again in great detail, the thanks to a fellow-actor for a scene-saving "ad lib", the comments on audience reactions, the delightful feeling composed of equal parts of exhaustion and elation—what play would be complete without them? And then, for days afterward, you quote and misquote lines from the play, applying them to all kinds of inappropriate situations. These quotations never seem funny to others, but to cast members, who comprise for the moment a sort of secret society, they are always hugely hilarious. Even the mistakes of rehearsal and performance can be laughed about now, and frequent recounting soon make the episodes a part of school legend. The play has been the stuff and substance of your life for a few weeks, and you will not soon forget it. The show may

be over, but the fun isn't. Besides, there's always another play coming.

(Next issue: "Friendship in Dramatics.")

### The High School Actor—His Heritage

(Continued from page 5)

anxious to impress the manager, he worked out such a wealth of personal business that he "stole the show" and his effort to exhibit himself ended in prompt dismissal. For by this time the ideal of a good production was the observance of the relationship of the actors to each other and to the play as a whole.

#### Summary

AND now, summing up the story of the actor from ancient Greece to our own time, we find that the various elements that make up our ideal of the modern actor's job and equipment, were derived from many different sources and at varying epochs in the world's history. And although it has taken some time to tell it all in detail, the main ideas can be stated very briefly. They are an intelligent understanding of the script; a voice with carrying power and trained to enunciate clearly; skill in pantomime to anticipate the line and to emphasize the idea; naturalness in the spoken word and in action; the habit of listening as in real life and reacting to what is being said; giving the character portrayed the individual touch; always keeping in mind the relationship of all the characters in the play to each other and to the play as a whole.

If the ambitious Thespian tries to observe these principles the chances are that he will be successful, PROVIDED he does not succumb to the great temptation of exhibitionism unless he is doing a bit of vaudeville. The vaudeville actor only is permitted to exhibit himself; in fact, he must, for he is entirely on his own, his "act" being his invention and having no relationship to a larger whole. Finally, we must not look down on the vaudeville actor for his is merely a different kind of acting from that of an actor in a play and there is room in the world for both kinds.

("Backgrounds and Benefits for the High School Actor" will be the subject of Miss Kruckemeyer's article in our November issue.—Ed.)

### Summary of the 1941-42 Thespian Season\*

PLAYS dealing with problems of youth again led in popularity among those staged during the 1941-42 season by high schools affiliated with the National Thespian Society. A summary of 337 high schools reporting as of August 1, 1942, shows that sixteen plays accounted for a total of 220 productions. The most popular play of the season, *Ever Since Eve*, topped the list with 65 productions, making it the most frequently produced play for any one season since these tabulations were started. It is of interest to note that this play received its premiere production at the First National High School Drama Conference sponsored by The National Thespian Society in June, 1941. (The reader is referred to the extremely interesting article, "So You Are Going to Give A Play," by Florence Ryerson and Colin Clements, authors of *Ever Since Eve*, which appears on page 2 of this issue. We recommend it to all playwrights writing for the high school stage, and to play publishers.)

Second place honors for the second consecutive year went to *June Mad*, also by Florence Ryerson and Colin Clements, with 25 productions. Last season 38 productions of this play were reported, while the year before it led the popularity list with 26 productions. In third place for the 1941-42 season went *What A Life* with 20 productions. Last season *What A Life* led the popularity list with 41 productions. Repeaters from last season's popularity list included: *Young April*, *Foot-Loose*, *Our Town*, *You Can't Take It With You*, *Little Women*, *Seven Sisters*, *Don't Take My Penny*, *Tish*, *Through the Night*, and *American Passport*. New to this year's list were *Midnight*, *Spring Dance*, and *Stage Door*, although *Stage Door* appeared on the list for the 1939-40 season.

Five productions for each of the following plays were also reported: *Yes and No*, *A Connecticut Yankee*, *The Barretts*, *George Washington Slept Here*, *Leave on Liberty*, *Night of January*, *One Mad Night*, *Oh Professor*, *How Could You?*, *Pure As the Driven Snow*, *Seven Keys to Baldpate*, and *Sky Road*.

It should be pointed out that these figures are based on 337 out of 527 Thespian schools. Undoubtedly, if reports from all schools were available, the figures given above would be subjected to important revisions. It should also be made clear that this summary does not take into consideration the productions given by that considerably larger number of high schools which subscribe for THE HIGH SCHOOL THESPIAN but which do not at the present time have Thespian Troupes.

Other interesting facts are revealed by this season's summary: Production of classic plays adapted for the modern stage included *The Doctor in Spite of Himself* (1), *The Imaginary Invalid* (4), *The Importance of Being Earnest* (2), *Peter Pan* (1), *She Stoops to Conquer* (2), *Taming of the Shrew* (1), and *Zaraguela* (1). Among the recent Broadway plays brought to the high school stage during the season were: *Out of the Frying Pan* (3), *Mr. and Mrs. North* (2), *High Tor* (1), *George Washington Slept Here* (5), *The American Way* (2). Other timely information covering the 1941-42 season appear in a statistical summary to be published later.

(\*A list containing the titles of all full-length plays reported by Thespian schools as of August 1, 1942, with the number of productions for each play, may be obtained free of charge by writing to The National Thespian Society, College Hill Station, Cincinnati, Ohio.)

# Staging the High School Play

This department is designed to assist teachers in choosing, casting, and producing plays at the high school level. Suggestions as to plays which should be discussed next or how this department can be of greater assistance to teachers will be welcomed.

Edited by EARL W. BLANK

Thespian Senior Councilor and Director of Dramatics at Berea College, Berea, Ky.

## CAPTAIN APPLEJACK

by DONALD WOOD

Director of Dramatics and Thespian Troupe  
Sponsor, Hibbing, Minnesota, High School

*Captain Applejack*, a comedy in three acts, by Walter Hackett. 6 m., 5 w., 10 m. extras. Royalty, \$25. Samuel French, 25 West 45th Street, New York City.

### Suitability

WHEN Walter Hackett wrote *Captain Applejack*, he must have had in mind the high school stage as well as the professional stage. The play is made up of strong scenes of conflict and suspense, genuine humor, colorful costuming, and a rapidly moving plot. The situations are clean and within the grasp of youthful actors. (Note: There is some drinking and smoking within the play, but this is handled in such an in-offensive way that even the most scrupulous moralists will find little wrong with the scenes.) The characters, at first glance, are stock types, but as rehearsals progress, the various roles take on authentic individualities that lift them out of the mere "hero-villain-heroine" category.

In addition to the main cast of eleven, the play has a scene in which ten or twelve male extras are to be used; thus is there an opportunity for a good many boys to get a bit of stage experience. Most of our extras were the school athletes—boys who were eager to be in a play if their athletic practice would not be totally taken up by too many rehearsals and too many lines to be learned.

### Plot

*Captain Applejack* bears the subtitle, *An Arabian Nights' Adventure*, and therein is expressed the theme of the play. Ambrose Applejohn is a mild fellow who secretly longs for adventure, for he fears that the calm routine of his daily life is making him old before his time. No sooner has he expressed these sentiments to his ward, Poppy Faire, when adventure and danger start to rush in upon him in the person of a beautiful woman, Anna Valeska, who has escaped from Russia; a Bolshevik spy known as Borolsky; a turban-wearing mystic who calls himself "Zoroaster" Pengard; and Mrs. Pengard who assists her husband in his psychic performances and in stealing jewels. A parchment hidden in the book case is the focal point for the action. The parchment tells that Ambrose Applejohn is a direct descendant of "Captain Applejack," a notorious pirate. While deciphering its message, Ambrose dozes over the parchment for a couple of minutes, and Act II is devoted to his dream. The second act is laid in the cabin of a pirate ship. The meek and mild Applejohn of Act I is now the bold, dashing buccaneer, Captain Applejack. All of the characters of Act I are in this act, but they, too, appear in slightly different form. Poppy Faire is now Applejack's faithful cabin boy; Anna Valeska has turned into a Spanish cap-

tive; Borolsky is a traitorous crew member who seeks to incite a mutiny; Pengard is a sly Chinese bosun. Hackett has given an extremely fine act to the contemporary stage in this act, for he has made a dream scene in which Applejohn's suppressed desires are depicted into something vital and exciting.

Act III finds Applejohn back in his own library, but the dream has had its influence on him for he accidentally employs piratical expressions, and he continues to swagger about as though his library were a ship's cabin. Applejohn makes a hero of himself by outwitting his enemies. He suddenly discovers that it is Poppy whom he loves, and when the curtain falls, we know that he will again return—and willingly—to his placid way of living.

### Casting

The play calls for actors who are free from inhibitions or who are capable of developing that freedom. There are several romantic scenes that are to be handled with melodramatic extremes. The pirates are swashbuckling characters. In brief, there is much emphasis placed on the broad, vigorous treatment that most of the roles demand.

Applejohn's acting tasks call for a timid, retiring chap who later develops into the terror of the Seven Seas. Anna Valeska and Borolsky must be capable of developing an accent that can pass for Russian. Borolsky should be a larger person than Ambrose so that the threats he makes on Ambrose's life can look plausible.

None of the parts in the play can be entrusted to weak actors. Every part is important and the appearance of a weak actor against this background of colorful adventure would be a sad let-down.

The pirate extras in Act II are important. In our production, these extras were interested in what they were doing and enjoyed their work. They made this act into one of the best ever presented at our school. I think this worth mentioning for occasionally there is the tendency to enlist "just anybody" for extras, and as a result the scenes in which the extras appear are apathetic affairs.

### Directing

Act I starts out with a good deal of exposition that can become quite dull to a theater audience unless a good deal of variety is put into the individual voices and all cues are picked up promptly. The beginning of the play is to establish the feeling that Ambrose's home is a place where dull routine reigns supreme; therefore, too much "fussy" and extraneous business should be avoided lest the library begin to look like a veritable hub of activity. There is just about enough physical business written into the script to keep the play visually stimulating during the initial

exposition. Once the exposition is dispensed with, the other parts of the act are relatively simple to handle. Author Hackett has made the conflicts clear-cut, and he has introduced the characters one by one and in novel fashion, so that the work of the actor and the director is laid out very clearly.

Act II, in the ship's cabin, is very short, lasting as it does for about twenty minutes, but those twenty minutes are filled with action. We played this entire act in a way that might be called "wild and broad." The actors learned how to fall easily after being thrown half way across the stage; the pirates learned how to swarm on stage in a convincing way and how to sweep out again with equal naturalness. This act is to depict the timid Ambrose suppressed aspirations, so it can be played broadly, almost melodramatically; but it should not be given a "hokum" treatment; the script states: "It is most essential that the dream should be played with perfect sincerity and seriousness." This does not mean with calmness and serenity, however.

Act III, too, has several expository sections that can prove very dull unless all cues are picked up and the actors impart a natural zest to these lines.

### Stage Problems

The play requires two sets. Acts I and III are laid in the library of Ambrose Applejohn. Against the back wall we had three bookcases to carry out the library theme. The center bookcase was slightly taller and wider than a door. This bookcase was mounted on rollers and placed against a door-flat (from which the door had been removed). Then near the end of the play, when Poppy accidentally discovered that the bookcase was movable, the case was swung out on a pivot, disclosing a small shadowy closet behind it. It is in this closet that the real pirate treasure is hidden. The script explains how two sliding panels can be used on the front of the bookcase, one to be the "known" panel and the other to be the panel that Poppy, near the end of the play, locates. The script also suggests that a back wall "falls out"—a difficult thing for an amateur stage to cope with. We found that by having one sliding panel at the base of the bookcase, and by having the bookcase movable, we got a very good effect. (One corner of the bookcase rested on a pivot-pin attached to the floor. This arrangement permitted the bookcase to swing out, door-fashion, from the wall without its looking too much as though it were merely a movable bookcase which could be pushed all around the room).

Act II, on board the pirate craft, obviously requires a different setting. We built several flats for this scene, which gave the students actual experience in scene construction. We used the backs of the flats, so that the battens, cross pieces, and braces would serve as panelling divisions. The set was painted a warm dark brown. At the



Scene from Act II of *Captain Applejack* as staged at the Hibbing, Minn., High School (Thespian Troupe No. 272). Mr. Donald Wood, director.

back of the set, two sliding doors (once used in a play as elevator doors) were used. In the center we placed a French door, plugging the bottom half with a wallboard panel and letting the top half serve as a window looking out onto the ship's deck. A mast with the foot draped in white muslin and festooned with ropes and rigging to simulate a sail was visible through the window. A plain blue sky drop served as backing. Just outside the two sliding doors that led into the deck were placed railings made of cardboard spindles (silhouettes). Two swinging doors were used, also, one at Stage R and one at Stage L.

Instead of using a buffet in the pirate scene, as suggested in the script, we used a carpenter's tool chest in which was kept the smaller, jewel-filled treasure chest. Search as our crews did, they were not able to unearth a buffet that would look appropriate in this scene, and the tool chest *did* look appropriate.

The library flats were sixteen feet in height, so we obtained an effective contrast by having the setting in Act II only 12 feet high. On Stage R were placed several empty kegs, a few oak-stained packing cases and two coils of rope—to give the appearance of pirate loot and nautical equipment.

The lighting in all three acts was focused low on the setting. A minimum of foot-lighting was used—just a glow of amber being used from this source. General lighting was obtained by the use of a number of straw and pink Baby Spots in the first border.

### Costuming

The costuming for the show requires attention, but it is not difficult. Modern

dress is used in Acts I and III, the only special costume required being that of Dennet who appears in Act III in the uniform of an English Bobby.

In Act II, pirate costumes are needed for all the men, except Pengard who appears in the pajama-like outfit of a Chinese bosun. The more elaborate pirate costumes go to Applejack and Borolsky. Poppy wears the usual sweater, tam, and ragged trousers of a cabin boy. Anna Valeska, who appears as a Spanish captive, wears a dress as pictured in the script. In fact, there are many good photographs in the manuscript of the play, and the director will find them very helpful in costuming the show.

### Rehearsals

We spent about five weeks in rehearsing the play, limiting ourselves to about ten hours of rehearsal per week. Only during the final week did we have any evening rehearsals. Act I is a very long act constituting approximately one-half of the play, so for about two weeks our attention was concentrated on this act. Then a week was spent on each of the remaining acts and another week on polishing the whole show.

### Make-up

The make-up requirements for *Captain Applejack* are not difficult. Of the leading men, only Pengard needs any special treatment, for he is to appear as a "little sallow man" in Act I, and as a Chinese bosun in Act II. A sallow make-up was used in the first act, and by using a Chinese wig in Act II, his appearance was sufficiently changed so that no alterations were needed in his facial make-up.

The pirates in Act II made themselves

up in true pirate fashion—scraggly beards, a few scars, tattooed chests, and arms, elongated sideburns, and generally darkened countenances. One of the crew appeared as a Negro which required that he be blackened to the waist.

### Budget

For us, *Captain Applejack* was not an altogether inexpensive show. It cost about \$80 to produce. The royalty was \$25 and the books were \$9.50. We rented our costumes from The Martin Giesen Company in St. Paul, Minn., expending about \$40 on this item.

### Publicity

Most of our publicity came from photographs and stories in the city paper and in the school paper. The local radio station "plugged" the show several times each day. The high school art classes made a number of attractive posters for us, and several large banners were placed in the school corridors.

The Minnesota Art Project (WPA) made fifty tri-colored silk screen window cards for us. A skilled artist on the Art Project staff designed the poster and ran them off. We paid for the material only, which amounted to about \$3.

### Programs

Here at the Hibbing High School we have adopted the use of a "foreword" on each of our programs. We believe that theater audiences enjoy having something to read on a program in addition to the customary program material: Cast, Time, and Locale. We also feel that an appropriate foreword helps to put the members of the audience in a more receptive mood. The foreword on the *Captain Applejack*

# Exercises in Dramatics

by EDWIN LYLE HARDEN

Director of Dramatics, New Braunfels High School, New Braunfels, Texas

## Emotional Expression

THE whole purpose of emotional expression is to arouse the audience to emotional response for unless the performer can make the audience feel as he feels (as the character he is portraying), he has not projected the emotion effectively, and all the audience gets is dialogue. In order to beget this emphatic response from the audience the actor must first determine the controlling emotion, or emotions, of the scene, and then make his voice, facial expression, gesture, movement and posture all contribute to effective expression. Most emotional scenes are climactic and require the actor to control the emotion in order to build gradually to the climax. But whether the scene is climactic or not, the emotion should grow gradually to its most forceful point, and then subside gradually. Likewise transitions from one emotion to another should be a gradual process. In all cases, care should be taken not to overdo, for the most effective expression is that which is controlled and leaves something to the imagination.

programs ran as follows:

"Playgoers in every period of history and in every country have enjoyed the antics of the involuntary hero—that meek and mild fellow who is suddenly confronted with a situation that really tests his metal.

"Walter Hackett has employed this beloved theme in *Captain Applejack*, filling the plot with much genuine adventure and novel romance. The play has long been a favorite with American and British audiences.

"When *Captain Applejack* was first presented on Broadway, the students of Princeton University selected it as the most 'rollicking, rousing and romantic' play of the year."

And in listing the names of the boys who depicted the pirates we avoided calling them either "extras" or "pirates." The term "extras" unfortunately has come to be a synonym on high school programs for "unimportant." The people who appear as supernumeraries are not unimportant. We avoided calling them "pirates" on the program, for that would have weakened the surprise that Act II is meant to deliver. Preceding the list of the pirates' names this label appeared on our program: "Supporting cast in Act II."

## Results

*Captain Applejack* delivers a good deal of innocent fun to the theater-going public, and perhaps that is the purpose of the stage in times as serious as these.

(Watch for staging of *The Trail of the Lonesome Pine* in Penthouse Style.)

The scene suggested here for practice illustrates the necessity for controlled expression of one of the more difficult emotions—grief, followed by a transition to supreme joy.

## On Vengeance Height\*

by ALLAN DAVIS

(Gram, an old, but vigorous mountaineer woman, and blind, is trying to keep her grandson, Clay, the only one left, from going out to kill Lem Carmalt, the last of the other feuding family.)

(Gram suddenly snatches his rifle and stands with her back to the door.)

Gram: Yo're not a-goin'.

Clay: I'm not a-goin' that-a-way, but the way I came. I'll creep through the lof' winder an' down th' holler tree an' thro' the grass like a snake. I'd be willin' t' be a snake t' get him.

Gram (Frantically): Yo're not a-goin', I say!

Clay (With a new dignity): Thar's a Carmalt out thar, Gram.

Gram: Yas.

Clay: Yo' know what they-uns done t' us.

Gram (The word being wrung from her): Ya-a-s.

Clay: Yo' killed one of 'em yo'self.

Gram: Y-a-s.

Clay: Then gimme that rifle-gun an' tell me t' go th' way y' tole yer sons ter go—

Gram (After an intense inward struggle, straightens out—and gives him the rifle): Yo' air the son of my sons. Go an' God keep yer eye cl'ar an' yer han' steady! (He mounts the ladder and disappears. The moment after he has left the room, Gram flings out her arms and breaks into passionate prayer.)

The following prayer is prompted by strong emotion and should be delivered with force and fervor, but controlled and suppressed. It should build, however, in volume and intensity as it progresses. The actor must remember also to hold force in reserve for the lines following the shots for they give cause for more intensified feeling.

Gowd A'mighty save him from th' hand o' that mis'ruble loun' a-waitin' fer him in the dusk o' this night. Don't let him pay in his young innocence fer the sins o' his fathers, fer th' enemies they made, fer the blood they shed. Here 'm I—an ol', he'pless woman—but don't cast me off—listen t' me in my trouble an' hev mercy on me! Take me 'stead o' him, O Lord! I ain't wuth a mite, but his whole life's ahead, an' he's got l'arnin'—what cain't he do. I ain't selfish 'nuff t' want him an' me both spared. Ef it mus' be one t' be taken t'night, Lord Gowd A'mighty, let it be me!

(Two shots ring out; a third; after a pause a fourth.)

The intensity of the feeling must not be allowed to diminish during the pause, and the next lines should begin with much stronger feeling than the preceding. However, the actor should not expend his entire force in the beginning, but hold something in reserve so he can build gradually to the climactic final lines.

Gram (With a stifled shriek, rushes blindly to the door, flings back the bar, and calls wildly):

MR. HARDEN is the author of *Practice In Dramatics*, a volume of exercises published by Walter H. Baker Co., 178 Tremont Street, Boston, Mass.

In forthcoming issues Mr. Harden will consider Tempo, Pause, Reaction and Response, Atmosphere and Mood, Dual Projection and Building to Climaxes.

Clay! (She waits) Clay—Clay! (Silence) Clay, don't yo' hear me? Hit's Gram, yo'r ol' gran'mother who loves you. Are yo' hurt, my little boy? Just say a word, one word, just say Gram, an' I'll know where yo' air, an' come to yo' an' help yo'. . . . Clay, Clay. . . . he's a-layin' out there, an' I cain't go t' him. . . . Yo' that are a-settin' up there a-watchin' me in my blindness with Yo'r everlastin' Eyes, ef Yo' cain't put seein' back in these spoiled eyeballs, make my hearin' sharp, sharp as Yo'r sword that's a-cuttin' my heart, so's I'll hear him ef he's a-callin', an' know that he's alive. (Her whole body seems to listen with a fierce intensity.) I don't hear nothin'. . . . He's daid.

At the completion of the lines the expression of grief should be the most forceful of the entire scene, but not expressed in loud, uncontrolled wailing which is neither dramatically effective nor in keeping with this particular character. The low, deep sobbing, giving the impression of effort to control the feeling, will awaken sympathetic response and hold it more effectively than the loud outburst. As Shakespeare has one of his characters say:

"... the grief that does not speak  
Whispers the o'er-fraught heart and bids it break."

(She bursts into sobs. Her frame shaking, she walks to the couch, falls on her knees beside it, and weeps. Composing herself stoically she rises, turns down the bear robe and blankets, and arranges the pallet as if to receive a wounded man. Then she feels her way to the table, reaches up to the hanging shelf, takes down a broad roll of linen, and stands there tearing it into bandages. The tears rolling down her cheeks, she murmurs, "Clay, Clay.")

During the latter part of this pantomime there should be a gradual subsidence in the expression of grief as it is brought under control. Unless this is done there will be an abrupt and unnatural transition to a contrasting feeling which follows, instead of the gradual fading out of the one and into another. Time is required to relieve oneself of a strong feeling, just as time is required for a strong emotion to develop to its full force. Gram's joy and pride is developed to a large extent by her pantomime in the last speech, but there must first be comprehension of what has happened before that feeling begins to manifest itself. The voice in her last line should be so charged with feeling that it will enhance still further the climactic effect.

Clay (Now a pale, stern man, comes to the doorway from the right): I done got him, Gram. He's daid.

Gram (Throwing out her arms, beating her hands together, and in infinite pride, satisfaction and ecstasy raising her shrill song of triumph): He's daid—he's daid—Lem Carmalt's daid! My Clay, he killed him!

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## Exercises in Make-up

By PROF. RAY E. HOLCOMBE

Department of Drama, Ithaca College, Ithaca, N. Y.

Questions pertaining to your problems on make-up are welcomed by Prof. Holcombe. Enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope with your letter.



### Planning a Make-up Program

IF make-up is to keep pace with the other ever-improving phases of high school play production, it will be necessary that we take stock of our situation, plan our make-up program, organize a competent group as a crew, and improve our techniques. Far too many groups confine the attention given to make-up problems to the night of dress rehearsal, fail to include well considered make-up plans in the design of their productions, and spend valuable practice time on showy, novel, or grotesque make-ups, to the neglect of developing techniques that might be applied to making effective representations of characters they might, logically, be called upon to play.

We are well aware of the fact that there are many fine make-up books on the market. Then, why write more on the subject? The answer lies in the fact that none of the make-up books are written with the high school player in mind, and that few, if any of them, are written by men who have had experience with the problems peculiar to high school play production. Then too, the assumption seems to be that the reader of the books will set himself to the task of practicing various of the make-ups. We are sufficiently realistic to know that, unless we are set to work with carefully graduated lessons, that the skills and the knowledge are apt to remain within the covers of the book.

It is the purpose of this article, and of the ones to follow, to detail a make-up program specifically adapted to the needs of high school play production. Our concern will be with the analysis of our particular needs, the organization of a working personnel, the development of progressive studies in make-up, and the application of practice work to the current problems in the next show to be produced.

### Organization of a Make-up Group

ONE of the most efficient methods of dealing with make-up is to organize, within the dramatic club, a group whose special interest runs in this direction. Whether the group is called, "The Mud Daubers," "The Make-up Crew," "Greasers" or what not, they should be banded together for the year's program, should be made to feel responsible for, and proud of their growing skill in their work.

Members of the crew should pay a fee (perhaps fifty cents each) which will be used toward the purchase of materials for the Crew Kit (to be explained in a later

### New Department

IN response to popular demand, we have added a department on Make-up for the convenience of our directors and students. Make-up has long been a neglected subject among too many amateur production groups. We sincerely hope the information and exercises offered by Prof. Holcombe will prove helpful to all who wish to learn more about make-up, particularly among the high schools.

Prof. Holcombe has taught make-up in high school and knows the problems which confront the high school director. Above all, he wants his department to be useful. He will welcome your comments and suggestions. In particular, he wishes to know the average number of straight make-ups and middle age make-ups your productions call for during the season. Please write him as soon as the occasion arises.

article). It is suggested, also, that the crew ask for a small sum from each production to be expended for the periodic building up and replenishing of the kit. Particularly desirable as members of the crew are some of the following: (1) a girl who has a clever "knack" at "hair-do's"; (2) a girl or boy who has a good eye for color, sketching, or design; (3) a boy who is interested in lighting; (4) a candid camera fiend. The girl who has a "knack" with hair will find that she is called upon repeatedly to set the dominant note in make-ups by experimentation with a hair-do. The art student will be a valuable addition to the group when they study light and shade, color, and design in their make-up work. The boy who is interested in lighting will find an outlet for his interests when the group considers the effects of light on make-up. The candid camera fiend will be a valuable find for the group since the "shots" of make-up studies will provide excellent material for study and for use in enlarged size for posters and for advertising.

The sponsor of the group who will act as their instructor will plan meetings as follows: Regular lesson meetings before the first play; then, a post-mortem meeting afterwards so that the past production may provide models (and preferably the actual models) for further study, possible compliment, or possible improvement; a resumption of the regular lesson meetings until the next show with its subsequent post-mortem.

### The Make-up Room

UNLESS your school happens to be so fortunate as to boast of stage dressing

rooms, your make-up is done within the confines of the front portion of a homeroom. The average situation is one in which the chairs are pushed back or the space is cleared in front of the pupils' desks and the "patients" for the make-up operation are seated "every which way," with the too-distant, or too-glaring white lights of the homeroom playing shadow tricks on the face of the person to be made up. It is only common sense to suggest that the conditions of stage light be approximated in the make-up room if we expect a character to look the same when he passes from the make-up room to the stage scene.

The homeroom can be easily and inexpensively converted into a good make-up room, the usual confusion eliminated, and the next day rebuke from an irate homeroom teacher avoided, if we give the matter a little thought and effort. If we put two homeroom tables together, end to end, place chairs around the sides and ends of the tables, we have an arrangement for centralizing the location of both people and make-up materials. We then locate a batten (a piece of board one inch thick by three inches wide) the length of the table. On this we wire up a number of sockets spaced about ten inches to a foot apart. We suspend this board (sockets down) between two supports which rest on the outer ends of the two tables. The supports for the socket board are shaped like an inverted T, and rest on the table top. The socket board, if hinged to the top of the upright support, can be easily dissembled by pulling the pin from the hinge. The rack can then be taken out and stored backstage. Colored and frosted bulbs are arranged in the sockets to get as near a likeness to the stage light as possible. If a middle support is added to the rack about six inches from the table level, a rack for leaning mirrors against it is provided. Waste baskets should be set at each end of the table and their use encouraged.

### Assignment

Now that we have an organization with which to work, and a place in which to work, let's get to the make-up lessons. You won't need the light equipment right away but you will need to come to the lesson with data and pictures.

1. Find out all you can about the characters in the plays given in your high school during the past three or, better yet, five years. Classify them as to type of make-up; i. e., man, middle age; woman, old age; etc., with the number of occurrences of each type. If they do not readily fall into certain classes do not lump them in. Make a separate entry. Formulate your own conclusions as to what make-ups, in the light of past frequent occurrence, seem to merit most attention.

2. Find five large pictures in magazines or elsewhere that you can bring to make-up class. Select the pictures on this basis: when you set up the picture at a distance, you note that the dominant clue that determines the impression received lies in the hat, the beard, the hair, the glasses, the shirt, etc.—any one of these. Blank out the facial expression and test out your idea before you decide on your picture.

# The Technician's Roundtable

Conducted by A. S. GILLETTE

Technical Director, University Theatre,  
State University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa



**QUESTION:** Our dramatic club finished the season with a balance of \$125 that we have decided to use in buying additional lighting equipment. What would you recommend?

**ANSWER:** Without knowing any of the particulars, such as what equipment is already on hand, the size of the stage, and its facilities, I would think that additional baby spotlights might be welcomed. I've yet to hear a technician say that he had more of the useful instruments than he could use.

Selecting the proper lighting instruments for a stage is a problem that continually bothers a great many Little Theatre groups. Unless some study has been given to this matter there is an excellent opportunity of making an expensive but poor investment. The lighting needs of each theatre will likely differ in some respects from those of any other so that a blanket answer to the above question must be accepted with reservation. Good lighting equipment is expensive and since practically all instruments are designed for a specific purpose, the more one knows about them the less chance there will be for mistakes. Despite the obviousness of that statement there are those who will make no effort to inform themselves, even casually, but will order their equipment blindly or unquestioningly accept the recommendation of a salesman who is more interested in making a good sale than in meeting the needs of a particular theatre. A little time devoted to a study of stage lighting in such texts as *Modern Theatre Practice*, by Heffner, Selden & Sellman, or *A Syllabus of Stage Lighting*, by Stanley McCandless, will eliminate practically all the guess work in ordering lighting equipment.

Stage lighting is characterized by two types of illumination, general and specific. General

illumination provides a shadowless light that removes excessive contrasts and produces a general tonality over the entire acting area. Specific illumination is confined to a limited area and is much more strictly controlled; it adds the variety to stage lighting.

The instruments used in creating general illumination are the footlights, borderlights, striplights, cyclorama lights and floodlights. With the exception of the floodlights these instruments are similar in construction and in the type of light they produce. Usually they consist of a strip composed of a series of reflectors and lamps. For many years the footlights and borderlights were the mainstay of stage lighting (and are still overworked in many theatres) but these have gradually been giving way in importance to a battery of spotlights that are continually advancing in design and usefulness.

Specific illumination is produced by spotlights of many types. Most non-professional theatre groups are interested in a few units that can be adapted to many of their light problems. The Spot-Floods or "X-Rays" is, as the name implies, a combination floodlight and spotlight. It is equipped with a ribbed glass or ribbed metal reflector that approaches the parabolic form that is well suited for providing a diffused illumination over a smaller area than a floodlight. For a short-throw, that is the distance from the instrument to the area lighted, this type of instrument is very useful.

The baby spotlight, with G-shaped lamp of 250 to 400 watts, is the standby of small theatres because of its adaptability. It is excellent for short throws from a batten over head and because of its size it can be concealed in fire places, ornaments or properties to focus attention on any specific object.

The medium and large sized spotlights contain mogul receptacles for 500 and 1000 watt G-shape lamps. The lamps used in all spot-

lights should have the concentrated filaments, designated by the letter and word "G-shape". These larger spotlights are used for longer throws such as from a light bridge to the up-stage areas or from a position in the auditorium ceiling or balcony front to the down-stage areas.

The characteristics of a good spotlight would include the following:

1. A strong, well ventilated, light, sheet metal hood.
2. The access door conveniently located for easy replacement of lamp.
3. The focusing assembly consisting of slide, lamp socket and reflector should be a single unit that may be easily regulated and set. Make sure ample provision has been made to prevent light spills.
4. A spherical reflector will add approximately 40% to the efficiency of a spotlight.
5. A plano convex lens is the type used in spotlights. These are designated by their diameter and their focal length such as 4½"x6" which means a lens with a diameter of 4½" and a focal length of 6".
6. Spotlights are designed to be hung from a batten or mounted on a floor stand by means of a yoke or a suspension arm. The yoke, since it supports the instrument from both sides, is preferable to some types of suspension arms.
7. Color frame guides that are enclosed at the bottom and two sides are desirable as this eliminates the risk of the color frame falling out. Some spring clips that grip the color frame hold it so tightly that there is the risk of throwing the instrument out of focus as the frames are changed.

**QUESTION:** We cannot use stage screws on our stage because of the nice, polished hardwood floor. How can we brace our scenery so it won't fall over?

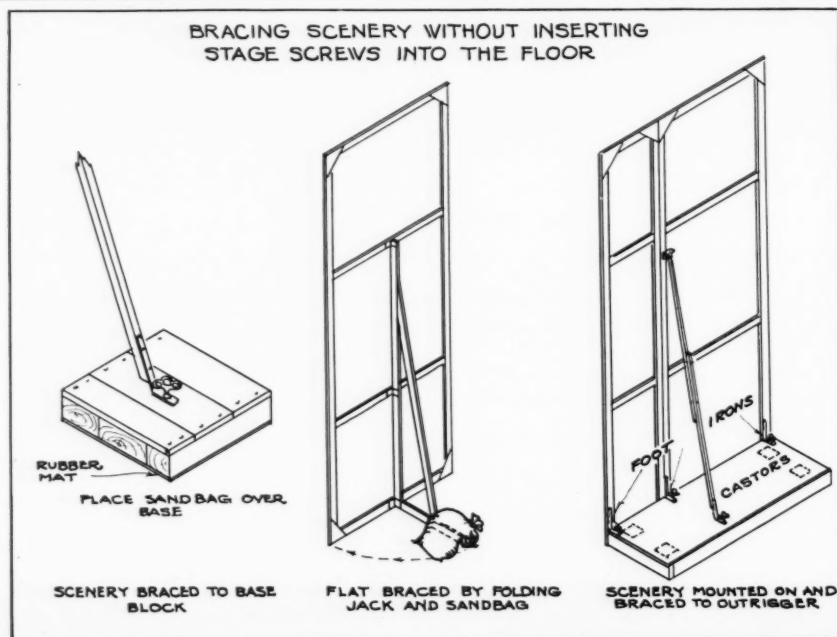
**ANSWER:** Here are three methods you could use to solve this problem.

1. Build a heavy wooden base block about 14" square and at least 2" thick. Cover the bottom of it with a thin layer of rubber such as inner tubing or a bath mat so that the block will not slip on the floor. Use your regular stage braces and screws, inserting the screws into the block instead of the floor. A sand bag may be thrown over the block for additional stability. In some cases it might not be objectionable to fasten the block to the floor by driving two finishing nails through the block into the joints formed by the flooring planks.

2. A folding jack may be used as a substitute for both the stage brace and screw. The jacks are made of 1"x3" in the form of a triangle about 7' high with a base about 3' or 3½'. The jacks may be hinged to the back of the scenery on the stiles or toggle bars at any point the set needs bracing. If loose pin hinges are used for joining the jacks to the scenery they may be removed by slipping the pins out of the hinges. Or the jacks may be shifted along with the scenery by folding them parallel with the backs of the flats. A sandbag should be thrown over the base of the jack for additional support.

3. The scenery may be mounted directly on an outrigger and braced in the conventional fashion to the top of the outrigger. The outrigger is a narrow platform made of 2"x4" and mounted on rubber tired castors. Wedges are placed under the platform to lock it into position and prevent the unit from creeping. This method, while more expensive, is admirably suited for heavy units that might otherwise prove unmanageable in a fast shift. Considerable additional rigidity is given to the bracing of a setting if a ceiling is used for masking in place of borders.

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Lloyd Smith, James Eckersell, Troupe 10, Madison High School, Rexburg, Ida.  
Phyllis Herrold, Troupe 12, Sac City, Iowa, High School.  
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Enid Dahl, Dorval Schmidt, Troupe 26, Wahpeton, N. D., High School.  
Elizabeth Barnard, Troupe 27, Morgantown, W. Va., High School.  
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Virginia Reese, Troupe 59, Danville, Ill., High School.  
Peggy Cole, Margaret L. Crossman, Troupe 60, Boulder, Colo., High School.  
Raymond Schell, Troupe 62, Jersey Township High School, Jerseyville, Ill.  
John Haldi, Dorothy Wolff, Troupe 66, Lehman High School, Canton, Ohio.  
Paul Nelsen, Troupe 67, Central City, Neb., High School.  
John Guthrie, Elaine Smith, Richard Redburn, Murial Avery, Troupe 70, Laramie, Wyo., High School.  
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Lucille Morin, Donald Henderson, Troupe 135, Berlin, N. H., Sr. High School.  
Lois Hull, Troupe 137, Bramwell, W. Va., High School.  
C. B. Sills, Mac Irvin, Troupe 138, Martin High School, Laredo, Texas.  
Marjorie Lawrence, Troupe 140, Nuttall High School, Lookout, W. Va.  
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Patricia Messer, Troupe 156, Revere, Mass., High School.  
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Tedd Burr, Troupe 173, Central High School, Bellevue, Ohio.  
Bill Sauriol, Bernard Michela, Troupe 174, Iron Mountain, Mich., High School.  
Mary Jane Doerner, Troupe 175, State College, Pa., High School.  
Betty Asher, Troupe 177, Orlando, Fla., High School.  
Patty Palmer, Troupe 179, Missouri Valley, Iowa, High School.  
Keith Tingley, Troupe 180, Tuscola, Ill., High School.  
Eustice Parnelle, Troupe 182, Ocala, Fla., High School.  
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 Roy Pierce, Troupe 250, Central Valley High School, Greenacres, Wash.  
 Dorothy Carney, Troupe 251, Polson, Mont., High School.  
 Jean Garber, Troupe No. 252, Wardner-Kellogg, Idaho, High School.  
 Helen Talbot, Troupe 253, Ravenswood, W. Va., High School.  
 Lawrence Mueller, Troupe 254, B. M. C. Durfee High School, Fall River, Mass.  
 Chester Otto Zellers, Troupe No. 255, Cannelton, Ind., High School.  
 Hilma Sweet, Troupe 256, Twin Falls, Idaho, High School.  
 Jack Murphy, Howard Deis, John Ferdinand, Dorothy Macarow, Troupe 257, Hazleton, Pa., Senior High School.  
 Betty Carraher, Harold Wilder, Troupe 259, Canton, N. Y., High School.  
 Penn Norris, Troupe 260, Big Creek High School, War, W. Va.  
 Dale Carlson, Troupe 261, Fairmont, Minn., High School.  
 Miles Nelson, Troupe 263, Litchfield, Minn., High School.  
 Betty Faye Breazeal, Troupe 268, Rupert, Idaho, High School.  
 Lois Rae Wilder, Julia Ann Powell, Troupe 269, Boonville, Ind., High School.  
 Doris Johnston, Troupe 270, Thompson Falls, Mont., High School.  
 Dale Liberty, Troupe 271, Pasco, Wash., High School.  
 Marian Chocos, Jewel Pollar, Troupe 272, Hibbing, Minn., High School.  
 Patricia Coleman, Millie Young, Troupe 275, Victory High School, Clarksburg, W. Va.  
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 Sophia Benko, Warren Letman, Troupe 299, Moundsville, W. Va., High School.  
 Martha Dawson, Mary Elizabeth Brigrance, Troupe 301, Marked Tree, Ark., High School.  
 Carol Caldwell, Maxine Westall, Troupe 302, Central High School, Madison, S. Dak.  
 Marilyn Peterson, Kathryn Ellsworth, Troupe 305, West Valley High School, Millwood, Wash.  
 Shirley Hrudka, Roger Tate, Troupe 309, J. Sterling Morton High School, Cicero, Ill.  
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 Fredrick Price, Maycel Khun, Betty Lou Dickens, Carl Gibson, Troupe 316, Van, W. Va., High School.  
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 Glenn Noret, Troupe 324, Wyoming, Ill., Community High School.  
 Helen Beronio, Neal Macurda, Troupe 325, Central Union High School, El Centro, Calif.  
 Harry Durant, Troupe 327, Miami, Fla., Senior High School.  
 Mary Miller, Irene Auble, Troupe 328, Ord, Neb., High School.  
 Robert Albrook, Sheila Colwell, Bettv Schaltz, Troupe 330, Watertown, S. Dak., High School.  
 Betty Elliott, Troupe 333, Burlington, Wash., High School.  
 Bill Dickson, Paty McClarney, Troupe 335, Amarillo, Texas, Senior High School.  
 Denny Washington, Troupe 337, Superior, Neb., High School.  
 Johnnie Ellis, Troupe 338, W. H. Adamson High School, Dallas, Texas.  
 Peggy Wagner, Jim Marshall, Troupe 342, Dover, Ohio, High School.  
 Grace Carpenter, Laroy Crow, Troupe 344, Cortez, Colo., Union High School.  
 Wayne Murphey, Troupe 352, Robbinsdale, Minn., Senior High School.  
 Kenneth Plumlee, Troupe 353, Abilene, Texas, High School.  
 Lee Coon, Troupe 355, Drew, Miss., High School.  
 John Fitzgerald, Kendall Smith, Troupe 356, Grand Ledge, Mich., High School.  
 Wilma Oksendahl, William Johnston, Troupe 360, Plentywood, Mont., High School.  
 Jack Christensan, Phyllis Marreiton, Troupe 362, Moorhead, Minn., High School.  
 Mary Phyllis Moore, Vera Carlson, Troupe 364, Jamestown, N. Y., High School.  
 Jack Connadt, Troupe 370, Cheyenne, Wyo., Senior High School.  
 Janet Walburg, Jeanne Knapp, William McDonald, Troupe 371, Seton High School, Cincinnati, Ohio.  
 William Statler, James Kenip, Troupe 372, Wellsburg, W. Va., High School.  
 Beatrice Scott, Troupe 373, Rainelle, W. Va., High School.  
 George Harvey, Patricia Barton, Troupe 374, The Dallas, Ore., High School.  
 Frank Hayler, Pauline Warrick, Troupe 377, Newton, Iowa, High School.  
 Billy Stephenson, Carroll D. Voorhees, Don Harling, Troupe 379, Tonganoxie, Kan., High School.  
 Ruth Gober, Troupe 380, Atwood, Ill., High School.  
 David Wilkerson, Troupe 381, Cripple Creek, Colo., High School.  
 Arlene Albee, Robert Davison, Morton Goldstein, Rex Nash, Tom Staley, Troupe 385, Centerville, Iowa, High School.  
 Vernon Stuckey, Troupe 387, Orrville, Ohio, High School.  
 William Robertson, Troupe 388, Oak Hill, W. Va., High School.  
 Edward Hankins, Gene Fenwick, Troupe 390, Greybull, Wyo., High School.  
 Lester Moore, Troupe 391, Miami Beach, Fla., High School.  
 Esther Bauer, Alan Teaney, Troupe 392, Monrovia, Calif., Arcadia-Duarte High School.  
 Pauline Marshall, Troupe 398, Leetonia, Ohio, High School.  
 Ethel Salyer, Bill Burford, Troupe 399, Mineral Ridge, Ohio, High School.  
 Dixie Riley, Dwight Clayton, Troupe 400, McClain High School, Greenfield, Ohio.  
 Dantzel White, Troupe 404, Box Elder, Brigham City, Utah.  
 Dorothy Jane Patton, Troupe 406, Unicoi County High School, Erwin, Tenn.  
 Jimmie Knapp, Margaret Carlson, Troupe 407, Caldwell, Idaho, High School.  
 Ruth Lybarger, Troupe 411, Osage Lincoln High School, Osage, Iowa.  
 Hulda Cosner, Troupe 412, Union, Ore., High School.  
 Billie Nell Grayson, Troupe 413, Mission High School, Merriam, Kan.  
 Mary Ramsay, Sue Attwoods, Troupe 419, Fordyce, Ark., High School.  
 Elmer Kaelin, Troupe 421, Leetsdale, Pa., High School.  
 Alleen Moeller, Wilbur Dowden, Troupe 422, San Marcos, Texas, High School.  
 Janice Mattson, Troupe 423, Watertown, Conn., High School.  
 Peggy Webber, Troupe 425, Tucson, Ariz., Senior High School.  
 Dorothy Czaplinski, Sarah Berg, Carteret, N. J., High School.  
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 Ernest Dondis, Troupe 431, Rockland, Me., High School.  
 Valda Stone, Jim Brocksman, Troupe 432, Dobyns-Bennett High School, Kingsport, Tenn.  
 Gene Richardson, Troupe 434, Chowchilla, Calif., Union High School.  
 Elsie Kramish, Troupe 436, Rawlins, Wyo., High School.  
 Juneal Syverson, Betty Leidl, Troupe 443, Washington High School, Fergus Falls, Minn.  
 Elizabeth Ann Fitzpatrick, Walter Shulaw, Troupe 446, Lawrenceville, Ill., Twp. High School.  
 Andy Smith, Troupe 447, Maupin, Ore., High School.  
 Bonnie Robison, Troupe 450, Barrackville, W. Va., High School.  
 Doris A. Pyle, Troupe 453, L. C. C. Reg. High School, Linderwold, N. I.  
 Joene Bowman, John Huish, Troupe 454, University High School, Provo, Utah.  
 Mary Ann Lawton, Joyce Siegan, Troupe 455, Benton Harbor, Mich., High School.  
 Mary Morse, Joseph Murphey, Troupe 456, Litchfield, Conn., High School.  
 Beverly Dearborn, Troupe 457, Miller, S. Dak., High School.  
 Jean McCrady, Doris Rogers, Troupe 458, Clay County, W. Va., High School.  
 Louis Doerman, Troupe 460, Hughes High School, Cincinnati, Ohio.  
 Joanne Braucht Artye Stadille, Troupe 462, Madera, Calif., Union High School.  
 Crvstal Ackerman, Elsie Carlson, Troupe 463, Snohomish, Wash., Senior High School.  
 Robert Allen, Bettv Van Schaick, Troupe 464, Santa Maria, Calif., Union High School.  
 Robert Hainline, Troupe 465, Macomb, Ill., High School.  
 Vera Elliott, Ted Smith, Troupe 466, Pendleton, Ore., Senior High School.  
 Patricia Tyrell, Verne Hinskink, Troupe 469, Wenatchee, Wash., High School.  
 Beckv Slack, Troupe 471, Lake Charles, La., High School.  
 Pattv Harruff, Troupe 473, Celina, Ohio, High School.  
 Mary Schweitzer, Lois Tonper, Bill Rankin, George Musgrave, Troupe 474, Francis Joseph Reirz High School, Evansville, Ind.  
 Jean Frailing, Clifford Carlson, Troupe 475, Iron River, Mich., High School.  
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(Additional names will be published in the November issue.)



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## On the High School Stage

News about interesting and important events in the field of high school dramatics. Dramatics directors are urged to contribute brief articles concerning their major activities from month to month.

### Bloomsburg, Pa.

THE Senior class production of *Through the Night*, on May 8, brought the 1941-42 dramatic season to a close at the Bloomsburg High School (Thespian Troupe No. 158), with Mrs. Harriet H. Kline as director and Troupe Sponsor. Other major productions of the year were *What A Life*, November 7, *The Tinker*, December 20, and *The Trial of Peter Zenger*, February 20. Over fifty members of the dramatics club, all of them in eighteenth century costumes, appeared in the production of *The Trial of Peter Zenger*. This was one of the outstanding plays of the year. The production program also included various one-act plays for assembly and the pageant, *The Making of the Flag*, produced on June 3.

### State College, Pa.

IN SPITE of the fact that no auditorium was available, members of Thespian Troupe No. 175 of the State College High School managed to produce a number of plays during the 1941-42 season under the leadership of Miss Janette M. Burns, sponsor. Thespians opened the year with an evening of one-act plays on November 21. Another bill of one-act plays was given by the Junior Class on January 24. The major play of the season, *The Leavenworth Case*, was given by the Senior Class on May 15, 16. An original pageant, *These Things Shall Endure*, brought the season to a close on June 4. A total of twenty-two members were taken into the Troupe. Some of the year's production were staged in the college Little Theatre.—Ann Louise Decker, Secretary.

### Geneva, Ohio

PATRIOTISM was the theme employed for the 1941-42 production of *Looking Through The Music Masque At A Legend* this past spring at the Geneva High School (Thespian Troupe No. 368). This project, an annual event at this school, attracted considerable attention in the community. Built around the finding of a "time capsule of 1942" somewhere in the United States in the world of the year 2942, Miss Dorothy Diles and Mr. Richard W. Deverell succeeded in producing a fantasy of distinct merit. Sponsoring organizations were the Music Department and Thespian Troupe 368. Thespians opened the production season on November 19 with a production of *Drums of Death*. *The American Way* was chosen as the final produc-

tion of the year. Thespians were extremely active in presenting plays and skits throughout the community before many town defense meetings. The season also resulted in the construction of a complete set of new stage scenery.

### Union, Ore.

THE *Night of January 16*, staged on March 19, 20, by the Senior class, closed the 1941-42 major dramatic events at the Union High School, (Troupe No. 412), with Mrs. Fern C. Trull as director and sponsor of Thespian activities. The other full-length play of the year, *Black Wings*, was staged by the Junior class on December 19. Another dramatic project which attracted considerable interest was the inter-class play tournament. The one-act play, *Senior Freedom*, was given on Parents' Night late in January. This event was attended by many of the parents of Thespians and several faculty members. Six students were granted Thespian member at the impressive ceremony of the evening. The season also included participation in the Speech Arts Festival at Eastern Oregon College on April 11. Overhead footlights for the stage were purchased with funds earned through various projects.

### The Dalles, Ore.

WORKING in the atmosphere of a new and beautiful school auditorium, members of Thespian Troupe 374 at the Dalles High School opened their 1941-42 season with a successful production of *Ladies In Retirement*, directed by Mr. Albert C. Hingston. On January 27 the Junior class followed with a production of *June Mad*, also directed by Mr. Hingston. In April came the light opera, *The Firefly*, given as an all-school production. Also in April came the Oregon State Festival sponsored by Mr. Hingston and his Thespians. The year came to a close in May with the Senior class play, *Stage Door*. Late in April Mr. Hingston accepted a position at Pacific University as director of dramatics. Thespians also participated in several radio programs. A large group of new students qualified for membership as Thespians and were admitted.

### Tracy, Calif.

PLAYS staged at the Tracy Union High School during the 1941-42 season included the three-acts, *Foot-Loose* and *The Lovely Duckling*, and the one-acts, *Jacob Comes Home*,

THE HIGH SCHOOL THESPIAN

## IN MEMORIAM

William Askvig, Thespian Troupe 291, Rochelle, Ill., Township High School. Bill was chosen Best Thespian for the 1941-42 season and for his outstanding performance in the finals of the Illinois State Drama Festival last spring was honored as a member of the All-State Cast. Bill passed away on August 14 after an illness of several months.

*Land of the Free, A Message from Khufu, The Wedding, and Not A Cloud in the Sky.* These were all given during the fall semester under the direction of Mrs. Emma M. Baumgardner. The Christmas play, *Come Let Us Adore Him*, was directed by Mr. Edward Lyon.

### Webster Groves, Mo.

THE 1941-42 year proved a busy and successful season for members of Thespian Troupe 191 of the Webster Groves High School, with Miss Shirley L. Pratt directing. The season began with the production of *Suspect*, a fascinating mystery play. This was followed by an open meeting attended by all students interested in dramatics. Mr. Harry R. McClain addressed the group on "The Development of the American Theatre." Thespian Douew Yntema followed later in the season with his radio show, *His Honor the Mayor*. The next major production, *Ever Since Eve*, was given during the latter part of February, with Miss Pratt also directing. The outstanding dramatic event of the year was the department's impressive production of *Elizabeth, the Queen*, on May 1, with Miss Pratt directing. A total of twenty new members were taken into the Troupe as a result of the season's successful program.

### Milwaukie, Ore.

PRIZES were awarded to *Bett's Best Bet* and to *Sugar and Spice* in an evening program of one-act plays given late in January by members of Thespian Troupe No. 75 of the Milwaukie High School, with sponsor Grayce Oliver supervising. All plays were directed by Thespians and were highly praised by the audience. Proceeds from the program were used to finance the Troupe's entry into the State Festival held in April at The Dallas, Oregon, and purchase of season tickets to the Portland Civic Theatre. National Drama Week was observed with the presentation of an excellent patriotic program sponsored jointly by Thespians and the Music Department. The two major plays of the year were: *You Can't Take It With You*, staged on November 6, and *Dulcy*, given as an all-school play, on April 10. Both plays were directed by Miss Oliver. Thespians were awarded highest honors in the Oregon State Festival.

### Coeur d'Alene, Ida.

THE spring semester of this past season saw the production of *Pride and Prejudice* and *George Washington Slept Here* by members of Troupe 190 at the Coeur d'Alene High School. Both plays were directed by Miss Dores E. Marsolais. Earlier in the season Thespians also staged *Ever Since Eve*. The year also included the production of a number of one-act plays, including *Antic Spring*, chosen for the spring play tournament. Members of Troupe No. 190 were hosts to the annual Inland Empire Thespian Luncheon. Miss Marsolais, who has been extremely active in all dramatic events in the northwest tentatively accepted in June an assistantship at the University of North Carolina for the present school term.

### Dayton, Ohio

THREE full-length plays were given last season at the Kiser High School (Thespian Troupe 493) under the direction of Robert W. Ensley, Troupe Sponsor. As the opening play of the year, members of the newly formed Troupe gave *Double Trouble* on November 27,

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28. On March 5, 6, the Junior class gave successful performances of *Midnight. The Imaginary Invalid*, given on April 30 and May 1, by the Seniors, brought the season to a close. The year's schedule also included various one-act plays and radio programs. A comedy or farce will be presented as the first full-length play of the present season.

### East Fairmont, W. Va.

MEMBERS of Thespian Troupe 3 of the East Fairmont High School, with Mr. H. T. Leeper as sponsor, were hosts to the annual district drama festival held at this school on April 11. Major plays of the 1941-42 season were: *American Passport*, staged by Thespians under Mr. Leeper's direction on October 25; *Young Adventure*, given by the Junior class on December 5 with Mr. Leeper directing; and the Senior class play, *Night Must Fall*, presented on February 16 with Miss Fairy Alyce Downs directing. The season also included various one-act plays and a series of radio programs. A total of ten new members were added to the Troupe—Jo Ann Dicken, Secretary.

### Girard, Ohio

WITH Miss Annette P. Crickard directing, the 1941-42 season at the Girard High School (Troupe No. 160) included the Senior class play, *What A Life*, November 14; *Family Portrait*, staged by the dramatics club on March 6; and *Huckleberry Finn*, presented by the Junior class on April 17. An important event of the season was the formal installation of the Troupe on January 21, with Miss Crickard and Mr. Morris in charge.

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## Monrovia, Calif.

**M**ONTHLY meetings were held by members of Troupe No. 392 of the Monrovia-Arcadia-Duarte High School this past season, with Mrs. Carolyn Doty as Sponsor. Two initiations and two parties were also held during the season under Thespian sponsorship. Thespians assisted with the formal installation of Troupe No. 490 at the Long Beach, California, High School. Later the two groups attended a performance of *The Little Foxes* at the Pasadena Playhouse. The 1941-42 major plays were *Ever Since Eve*, given in November, and *Cat O'Nine Tails*, staged by the Senior class in February. Thespians participated in the Pasadena Playhouse play tournament held in April. A large group of new students qualified for Thespian member as a result of the year's work.—*Patsy Baker, Secretary.*

## Middletown, N. Y.

**F**RANCES SWANN'S comedy, *Out of the Frying Pan*, was successfully staged on March 12, 13, by the Senior class at the Middletown High School (Thespian Troupe 74). The season of major plays opened with the Thespian production of *June Mad* on November 16, 17. Thespians closed the year with two excellent performances of *Don't Take My Penny*, on April 23, 24. Early in May Thespians attended the Broadway performance of *Junior Miss*. The season's program closed late in May with an elaborate banquet which was addressed by Dr. M. Kramer of Columbia University. All Thespian and dramatic activities were under the capable leadership of Miles S. McClain and Manuel Rosenblum.—*Ruth Finch, Troupe President.*

## Pontiac, Mich.

**H**IGH praise from enthusiastic audiences and from the local press greeted the production of 320 *College Avenue* on March 18, 19, 20, 21, at the Pontiac Senior High School, with Mr.

W. N. Viola directing. Speaking editorially, the Pontiac Daily Press observed that "Pontiac is particularly fortunate to possess leaders who are unusually capable, both as directors and as actors and musicians. The enthusiastic applause which greeted the high school play bore eloquent testimony to this fact. Let the good work go on." The season at Pontiac opened with *The Servant In The House* staged on December 4, 5, with Mr. Viola directing. Evenings of one-act plays were given on January 21 and on May 13. Weekly programs by members of the radio classes and the Radio Guild were presented over Station WCAR. An outstanding event of the season was the establishment of Troupe 499 at this school with Mr. Viola as Sponsor.

## Meridian, Miss.

**S**ENIOR members of Thespian Troupe 134 of the Meridian Junior and Senior High School gave a splendid performance of *Peg O' My Heart* on May 8 with co-sponsor Dorothy Beswick directing. A second major play, *You Can't Take It With You*, was postponed until this fall due to illness of the director, Miss Lois Stewart. The season also included a large number of one-act plays staged for assembly. In the fall dramatics students presented three broadcasts over Station WCOC. Thespians at this school are divided into a junior group supervised by Miss Stewart and a senior group directed by Miss Beswick. The two groups had a total of sixty-six members by the time the year came to a close.—*Nancy Moyer, Secretary.*

## Edmonds, Wash.

**T**WO major productions, *Guess Again* (December 12) and *Oh Professor* (April 17), were given this past season at the Edmonds High School (Thespian Troupe No. 424), with Miss Grace Bliss directing. Thespians were responsible for the production of two original skits at a special assembly program. Many students attended the Drama Week Conference at

the University of Washington. Several projects were sponsored to raise funds, part of which were used to purchase costumes. Ten new members were added to the Troupe. Several projects are being planned for the present season.—*Pat Morgan, Secretary.*

## Greenfield, Ohio

**T**HESPIANS of Troupe 400 of the Edward Lee McClain High School produced four major productions during the 1941-42 season, with Sponsor Wylie Fetherlin directing. The season opened on December 16 with a production of *The Tin Hero*. This was followed on December 23 with the production of two one-act plays. On March 19 came the performance of two one-act plays, one of which was later entered in the drama festival at Springfield, Ohio. The outstanding event of the season was the successful production of *Nick of the Woods*, a lively "meller-drammer," on May 12. The season also included a variety of one-act plays and the production of a minstrel show written and directed by Sponsor Wylie Fetherlin.

## Cicero, Ill.

**T**HE 1941-42 season proved a busy and successful one for dramatics at the J. Sterling Morton High School (Thespian 309). The dramatics association of the school, in which Thespians play a leading part, staged several one-act plays for their monthly meetings. Drama Week was observed with a broadcast over Station WHFC. The major play of the year, *Honest Abe*, was given by the Senior class on April 24. An important event of the season was the dramatic banquet which was well attended by students of the Speech Department. Thespians celebrated their initiation ceremony with a theatre party—a tradition regularly observed by members of this Troupe. Members of the Drama class attended performances of several professional productions in Chicago, including *The Corn Is Green*, *Candle in the Wind*, and *Watch on the Rhine*. All dramatics activities were directed by Miss Helen J. Todd.

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### Austin, Tex.

WACO Senior High School was awarded first place in the State One-act Play Contest held at the University of Texas on May 7, 8, 9. The winning play, *The Happy Journey*, was directed by L. Bruce Roach. Two members of the cast were on the All-State Cast. Second place honors went to the Austin Senior High School, while the Amarillo High School (Thespian Troupe 335) was awarded third place for its production of the play, *Afterwards*, directed by Mrs. N. N. Whitworth. Other schools participating in the state finals were: Huntsville, Austin (El Paso), Carthage, Robstown, and San Angelo. The event was directed by Mr. F. L. Winship of the Texas Interscholastic League.

### Superior, Neb.

THESPIAN Troupe No. 337 of the Superior High School received the only rating of Superior in the district drama festival held late in February. Sponsor Harold L. Ahrendts directed. The year's major plays were *Almost Eighteen*, staged in November by the Junior class, and *Ever Since Eve*, produced by the Seniors early in May. Mr. Ahrendts directed both productions. *A Message From Khufu* was the winning contest play entered in various tournaments by Thespians of this school.

### Jeannette, Pa.

THESPIANS of Troupe 304 of the Jeannette High School gave two performances of *Our Girls* on March 25, 26, with Sponsor Shirley I. Rugh directing. The other major play of the year was given in November by the Drama Classes. The season also included the production of several one-act plays and a Thespian Revue on May 6, with all Thespian members participating. The annual Thespian banquet and initiation was held on April 20.—Rose M. Crock, Secretary.

### Oelwein, Iowa

THESPIAN Troupe 194 was formally established at the Oelwein High School on March 27 with nine charter and one honorary member taking the Thespian pledge. The impressive ceremony was held in the presence of the entire student body, with Mrs. Maude Howell, Miss Margaret Wolff and nine dramatics club students assisting Miss Marion Bailey during the ceremony. The 1941-42 season included the production of *Anne of Green Gables*, December 5, a program of three one-act plays on March 3, and the Thespian production of an original three-act play, *Belle of the South*, on May 21, 22. The author, H. G. Streight, is an honorary member of the Troupe. A total of fourteen students had taken the Thespian pledge by the time the year came to a close.—Lois Benzer, Secretary.

### Coral Gables, Fla.

FIFTEEN students became charter members of Troupe No. 476 at an impressive ceremony held before the student body of the Ponce de Leon High School early this past spring. Miss Charlotte Motter of Miami University gave the Thespian pledge to the new members, while principal H. N. Rath presented the individual certificates. The ceremony was under the direction of Mrs. Margarite Harvey, director of dramatics. The new Troupe became a unit within the Top Hatters Dramatics Club which is now in its eleventh year of activities. The year included the production of *June Mad* given by the Senior class in January, as well as the production of several one-act plays for assembly. Dramatics students also participated in three radio programs given over station WIAM.—Mary Gene Lambert, Secretary.

### Worcester, Mass.

TWELVE schools participated in the eleventh annual New England Secondary School Drama Festival held at Clark University on April 24, 25, with George Quinby of Bowdoin College, Carl Glick, New York City, and Florence Brown, Boston, as the three judges. Participating schools represented the winning plays of festivals held in six New England states earlier in the spring. Schools and their plays were as follows: Classical High School, Providence, R. I. (*All For Nothing*), North Providence, R. I. High School (*Dust of the Road*), Manchester, N. H. High School West (*Darkness at the Window*), Montpelier, Vt., High School (*The Flattering Word*), Cambridge, Mass., High School (*The Old Lady Shows Her Medals*), Central High School, Manchester, N. H., (*Eternal Life*), Watertown, Conn., High School (*The Bishop's Candlesticks*), Revere, Mass., High School (*Dear Brutus*), Manchester, Conn., High School (*Pink and Patches*), Rockland, Me., High School (*The Last Curtain*), Poultney, Vt., High School (*Goodnight, Please*), and Brunswick, Me., High School (*The Doctor in Spite of Himself*).

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### Clay, W. Va.

AS a direct result of the enthusiasm and initiative of the dramatics instructor, Mrs. Howard Bryant, a large dramatics club was established at Clay County High School early in the fall of 1941. Later the club was granted Thespian Troupe No. 458 and immediately assumed the sponsorship of several dramatics projects. The first major play given by the new troupe, *Little Geraldine*, was staged on February 10, with Mrs. Bryant directing. As class projects several one-act plays were given during the season. In April several members of the Troupe participated in the district literary contest. Spring also saw the production of the operetta, *The Lucky Jade*, in which Thespians played prominent roles. By the time the year had come to a close, a total of fifteen students had qualified for Thespian membership.



Scene from the comedy, *Don't Take My Penny*, a production of Thespian Troupe No. 74 of the Middletown, N. Y., High School. Directed by Mr. Miles S. McClain.

# Winning Programs *of the 1941-1942 Season*

## Printed Programs

**First Place:** *Peter Pan*, Troupe No. 385, Centerville, Iowa, High School. Directed by Bernard D. Greeson and John K. King. Program contains clever sketches suggesting characters from the play, cast and production staff, detailed production notes, statement concerning directors, biographical statement of James M. Barrie, and a complete synopsis of the story. While not the most attractive program received, this is easily the most complete of those judged. (Prize, \$3.00.)

**Second Place:** *Zarageta*, Troupe No. 53, Washington Gardner High School, Albion, Michigan. Directed by Miss Leitha V. Perkins. Artistic cover design in green printed on white stock. Program contains usual information plus copy of "Grease-Paint News" with brief articles on production, drama during war time, sponsor, characterizations in play, miscellaneous notes, troupe membership and officers. A program designed to "sell" dramatics to the audience. (Prize, \$2.00.)

## Honorable Mention

(In the order listed)

*Death Takes A Holiday*, Troupe No. 489, Dover, Del., Community High School. Directed by George H. Henry. Mrs. Myrtle Cabbage, Troupe Sponsor.

*Ever Since Eve*, Troupe No. 190, Coeur D'Alene, Ida., High School. Directed by Miss Doris E. Marsolais.

*Pride and Prejudice*, Troupe No. 190, Coeur D'Alene, Ida., High School. Directed by Miss Doris E. Marsolais.

*Ever Since Eve*, Troupe No. 334, Chardon, Ohio, High School. Directed by Mr. I. A. Canfield. *Family Portrait*, Troupe No. 489, Dover, Del., Community High School. Directed by Mrs. Myrtle Cabbage.

*The Tin Hero*, Troupe No. 400, McClain High School, Greenfield, Ohio. Directed by Mr. Wylie Fetherlin.

*Little Women*, Troupe No. 377, Newton, Iowa, High School. Directed by Miss Naomi R. Boslough.

*The Ivory Door*, Troupe No. 353, Abilene, Texas, High School. Directed by Mr. C. B. Ford.

*Midnight*, Troupe No. 59, Danville, Ill., High School. Directed by Miss Mary Miller. "Thespian Club Programs," Troupe No. 412, Union High School, Union Ore. Sponsored by Mrs. Fern C. Trull.

## Mimeographed Programs

**First Place:** *The Curse of Saldoom*, Troupe No. 106, Champaign, Ill., Senior High School. Directed by Miss Marion Stuart. Egyptian characters shown in brown on cover. Program includes statement about author, synopsis of play, cast and production staff, statement concerning National Thespian Society and statement about National Drama Week. (Prize, \$3.00.)

**Second Place:** *Looking Through the Music Masque*, Troupe No. 368, Geneva, Ohio, High School. Directed by Dorothy V. Diles and Richard W. Deverell. Clever cover design consisting of "V" three dots and a dash done in red, white and blue colors. Program contains statement of "Music Masque", events on program and drawing showing various aspects of Victory Council activities at this school. (Prize, \$2.00.)

## Honorable Mention

(In the order listed)

*Ever Since Eve*, Troupe No. 26, Wahpeton, N. D., High School. Directed by Miss Ida Erstad. "Troupe Program," Troupe No. 102, Snyder, Texas, High School. Miss Rose Marie Clawson, Sponsor.

*Pure As the Driven Snow*, Troupe No. 314, Staples, Minn., High School. Directed by Miss Landfiar. Miss Jean Simmer, Troupe Sponsor.

*Deep Waters*, Troupe No. 50, Roosevelt High School, Wyandotte, Mich. Directed by H. Lyle Lyon, Genevieve Fox and Carl Hardwicke.

*Seven Sisters*, Troupe No. 214, Carlisle, Pa., High School. Directed by Miss Charlotte B. Chadwick.

*Anne of Green Gables*, Troupe No. 509, Huntington Beach, Calif., Union High School. Directed by Mrs. Edna Dean Condon.

*Jane Eyre*, Troupe No. 481, Thomasville, Ga., High School. Directed by Miss Wynette Phillips.

"Assembly Program," Troupe No. 10, Madison High School, Rexburg, Idaho. Mr. Preston Gledhill, Sponsor.

"Banquet Program," Troupe No. 26, Wahpeton, N. D., High School. Miss Ida Erstad, Sponsor. *Out of the Frying Pan, You Can't Take It With You, Pride and Prejudice*, Troupe No. 308, Darien, Conn., High School. Miss Elsa Pettersson, Director.

*Once and For All*, Troupe No. 352, Robbinsdale, Minn., High School. Directed by Miss Bess V. Sinnott.

Total number of programs entered in the 1941-42 Program Contest: Printed programs, 192; mimeographed programs, 192; total, 384. Number of programs entered in the 1940-41 Contest, 364.

All Thespian Troupes are urged to enter their programs in the 1942-43 Program Contest, the results of which will be announced a year from now.

## Dodge City, Kans.

**SUPERIOR** rating was awarded to plays given by the high schools of Lakin, Ashland, Liberal and Scott City, Kansas, in the annual spring drama festival held at the Dodge City Junior College on March 20, 21. Twenty-two schools participated. The plays were judged by Miss Ester L. Holcomb, instructor of Speech at the Dodge City Junior College. Thespian Certificates of Merit were awarded to all school whose entries received Superior Rating.

## Oak Hill, W. Va.

**MR. AVERAGE AMERICAN**, staged on May 15 by the Senior class, was the major production of the past season at the Oak Hill High School (Thespian Troupe No. 388), with Miss Zella C. Bishop directing. During the year a large number of one-act plays were staged for the benefit of the school and community. April proved a particularly busy month with plays entered in the district speech festival at Montgomery, the county play festival, and the regional festival at Charleston. Thespians also took part in and supported the school minstrel show. A total of six students were given the Thespian pledge as a result of their work in dramatics.

## Boonville, Ind.

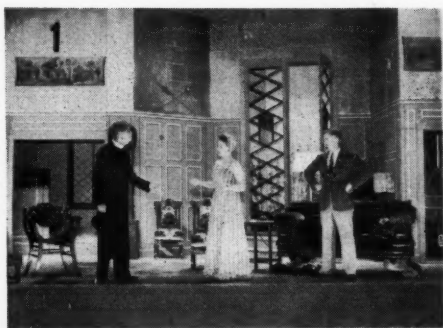
**THE** Senior class play, *Ever Since Eve*, on May 13, 14, was the major play of the 1941-42 season at the Boonville High School (Troupe No. 269). Miss Ravia Garrison, Sponsor, directed the play. The year saw the production of many one-act plays for special occasions and as part of a series of exchange programs with other nearby schools. Variety shows, skits, and a pageant were also part of the year's activities. Thespians closed the season on May 20 with the initiation of eleven new members in the school building. National Drama Week in February was observed, with Lois Rae Wilder and Julia Ann Powell speaking on the history and program of the National Thespian Society. The 1941-42 season was one of the most successful in recent years, with Miss Garrison directing and supervising all dramatics activities. —Martha Metz, Secretary.

## Greenacres, Wash.

**NEW** interest in dramatics was the result of an active season sponsored at the Central Valley High School this past year under the leadership of Miss Dorothy Moore Villa. The all-school play, *Ever Since Eve*, given on March 27, proved highly successful and resulted in a sizeable cash balance for the school. The year saw the production of several one-act plays, some of them being original plays written by Thespians. Several members of the troupe came away with honors from a declamation contest held on March 13 at Spokane, Washington. Thespians presented a radio program over Station KGA during Boys and Girls Week. Thirteen students were qualified for Thespian membership.

## Crossville, Tenn.

**THE** 1941-42 season for the Cumberland County High School (Troupe 428) included the production of two major plays, *Cyclone Sally*, given by Thespian early in November, and *Mama's Baby Boy*, a joint Thespian and dramatics club production on February 12. The year also included successful speech and drama recitals in the fall and early spring, two Thespian initiation ceremonies, and the production of several one-act plays and skits. Several students attended performances of *Hansel and Gretel* and *Kind Lady*, in Murfreesboro. In spite of the fact that many of the play rehearsals had to be held during recess periods, Thespians were able to sponsor a successful program for the year. Miss Ethel W. Walker directed all dramatics activities.



1. *Tons of Money*, given by Thespian Troupe 463 at the Snohomish, Wash., High School. J. Carroll Lundy, director.

2. Rehearsal for *Antic Spring* at the Revere, Mass., High School (Troupe 156). Miss June Hamlin and Miss Emily Mitchell, Troupe Sponsors.

3. Characters from *Once There Was a Princess* as staged by Thespian Troupe 477 of the Central High School, Alpena, Mich. Miss Harriet Foley, director.

4. *The Laundry Mark*, a one-act play given by Thespian Troupe 26 of the Wahpeton, N. D., High School. Miss Ida M. Erstad, director.

5. Miss Francis Young, Thespian Troupe Sponsor, Trinity High School, River Forest, Ill.

6. Miss Ida M. Erstad, Thespian Troupe Sponsor, Wahpeton, N. D., High School.

7. Miss Mary Ella Bovee, Thespian Troupe Sponsor, Canton, N. Y., High School.

8. Rosemary Ensign as Angelica in *The Mad Hatters*, a production of the Field-Kindley Memorial High School, Coffeyville, Kansas. Miss Lydia Back, director.

9. Johnny (Jack Christenson) and Spud (Philip Price) discuss their love problems. From *Ever Since Eve* at the Moorhead, Minn., High School (Thespian Troupe No. 362). Miss Clara Strutz, director.

10. Donald Nelson as Peters, the Hermit, in *Seven Keys to Baldpate* at the Sac City, Iowa, High School. Mr. B. E. Moeller, director. (Thespian Troupe 12.)

11. Thespian Wanda Rinehart as Aunt March from *Little Women*, a production of Troupe No. 377 at the Newton, Ia., High School. Miss Naomi R. Boslough, director.

## READINGS FROM BROADWAY PLAYS

### Humorous

**George Washington Slept Here.** Hart-Kaufman. 1942 cutting from the New York success. Newton Fuller buys a place in the country. His wife is abashed to find no water, no road and practically no roof, but this was all offset in Newton's eyes with the belief "that George Washington slept here." Fun galore. 60c

**Man Who Came to Dinner.** The. Hart-Kaufman. 1942 cutting from the Broadway and screen favorite. 60c

**You Can't Take It With You.** Hart-Kaufman. 1942 cutting from the celebrated comedy. 60c

### Dramatic

**Dark Victory.** Brewer-Bloch. 1942 cutting from the play that was produced in New York with Tallulah Bankhead, and as a motion picture with Bette Davis. 60c

**Of Mice and Men.** John Steinbeck. 1942 cutting from the New York play. It is the story of George and Lennie, farm hands. Lennie loves animals so much that his petting kills them. Finally he strangles a girl and is pathetically unaware of what he has done except that it is something that George will think is wrong. George, to save him from a worse fate, shoots him. 60c

**Susan and God.** Rachel Crothers. 1942 cutting from a Broadway outstanding success. Susan, a charming young matron, is adored by her husband and daughter, but she is too selfish to make a home for them. She has discovered a "new" religion, just a fad to her, but her husband believes she means what she says, and promises her that if she will open their home for him and his daughter that he will stop drinking. She begins her job resentfully but finds herself liking it. 60c

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### Seth, W. Va.

**T**HE Gang's All Here, given in December, marked the beginning of major dramatic productions for members of Troupe 212 of the Sherman High School. Formal initiation of the troupe took place in January under the sponsorship of Mrs. Mary William Tamplins. Members of the troupe at Van High School were special guests for the occasion. Thespians also had prominent parts in the Senior class play, *I'm In The Army Now*, given on April 10 and 28. In April Thespians entered the play, *Eternal Life*, in the district drama festival at Charleston High School. Miss Pauline Ellis assumed charge of dramatics and Thespian activities early in the spring.—Charlotte Pioch, Reporter.

### Aurora, Neb.

**O**FFICERS for Troupe 17 of the Aurora High School this season are: Eloise Ernest, president; Merle Otto, vice president; and Elsie Bowlin, secretary-treasurer. The 1941-42 season included the production of several one-act plays as well as three major productions, *Smilin' Through*, December 4, *Going Places*, March 27, and *June Mad*, May 21. National National Drama Weeks was appropriately observed early in February. The last initiation of the year was held on April 13 at which time three students received the Thespian pledge. All dramatics activities were directed by Miss Loine Gaines, Troupe Sponsor.

### Carlisle, Pa.

**M**EMBERS of Thespian Troupe 214 celebrated their tenth anniversary as a Troupe in May with an impressive ceremony attended by over one hundred and fifty guests and alumni members. Featured on the program was the presentation of a one-act play and recollections given by the original troupe sponsor, by Miss Charlotte B. Chadwick, present sponsor and a charter member, and by other alumni members. Representatives of nearby troupes were present for the gala affair. The 1941-42 season proved highly successful. Early in the fall it was decided to hold two Thespian meetings a month. In previous years only one meeting was held each month. At these meetings Thespians presented Quiz programs, readings from outstanding plays such as *Our Town*, reports of various stage productions, and the presentation of one-act plays. Thespians have been unusually successful with the make-up work during the past several seasons. Major plays of last year were

*Ever since Eve*, December 4, 5; *American Passport*, January 29, 30; and *What A Life*, April 23, 24. Miss Chadwick directed all three productions.—Phyllis Kennedy, Secretary.

### Lancaster, N. H.

**M**EMBERS of Troupe 311 of the Lancaster High School opened the 1941-42 season in November with the production of *What a Life*, directed by the Troupe Sponsor, Mrs. Gertrude R. McGoff. In December the Dramatics Club presented *Why the Chimes Rang*, a truly impressive production. The spring semester included the production of two one-act plays, *Crinoline and Candlelight* and *The Professor Roars*, before two local organizations. These were also used as part of exchange programs with neighboring schools. The season also included the observance of a Drama Day at which time three one-act plays were given. Interest in dramatics continues high with a total of ninety members. The season resulted in fourteen students becoming Thespians under Mrs. McGoff's leadership.

### Wichita, Kans.

**T**HESPIAN Troupe No. 511 was formally established at St. John's Academy on April 30, with Mrs. Osythe Dearsmit Moore as sponsor. The impressive ceremony was seriously received by the candidates and the entire student body. The troupe had its first meeting on May 12 at which time officers were elected. Activities for the year closed on May 14 with a banquet and participation in a Catholic dramatic play festival. Major plays for the year were *Little Women*, given on December 15, and *It's a Ming*, staged on May 6. The program for the year also included several one-act plays, with *The Summons of Sariah* being entered in the festival held on May 14. A total of twelve students were given Thespian membership. Mrs. Moore writes that she is looking forward to her Thespian activities for this season.

### River Forest, Ill.

**T**WO scenes from *Ladies In Retirement* brought a rating of Class A to members of Thespian Troupe 306 of the Trinity High School, with Miss Frances Young directing. The play was entered in the Illinois State Dramatics Festival held at the University of Illinois on April 24, 25. Marie Petrillo was chosen as a member of the State All-Star cast for her portrayal of Ellen. Thespian Marita White received fourth place for her reading in the interpretation section of the festival. Other members of the winning cast were Thespians Helen McSweeney, Claire Burns, Audrey Smith, and Marilyn Keeley. Other major dramatics activities of the season were the Thespian Variety Show, the production of Kenneth Turner's version of *The Imaginary Invalid*, and the production of *Ladies In Retirement* as the Senior Class play.

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### Montrose, Colo.

**T**HESPIANS of Troupe No. 383 at the Montrose County High School took leading roles in a successful production of the Senior class play, *The Man Who Came To Dinner*, on March 13, with Miss LaVerne Clarke directing. The role of Sheridan Whiteside was played by Thespian Eddie Cornett, Troupe President. Thespians and members of the dramatics club acted as host on March 27 for the Montrose section of the Western Slope One-act Play festival. Plays were entered by the high schools from Ouray, Ridgway, Montrose, Nucla, Olathe, Gunnison, and Telluride. Mr. Kenneth Ury of Mesa Junior College judged all performances, awarding Superior Rating to Montrose, Gunnison and Olathe. Mr. James A. Johnston served as director of dramatics and Troupe Sponsor during the season.

### Leominster, Mass.

**T**HE first performance in the United States of Julien Luchaire's play *Altitude 3200*, was given in mid-May by the Senior class of the Leominster High School, with Mr. John F. Joyce directing. Permission was received to stage the play under the title, *The World Is With Us*. Mr. Joyce reports that the play was first produced in 1937 at *The Theatre a l'Etoile* in Paris. The play is particularly well-suited to production by young people since it presents the point of view of youth towards the modern world and everyone of the characters is the same age as the performers. This is the third premiere given by a graduating class of this

school. Charles Mere's *La Captive* was given in 1938, and an adaptation of Doroth Canfield Fisher's novel, *Seasoned Timber*, was given in 1940. *Macbeth* in modern dress and *Romeo and Juliet* were also staged in the intervening years.

### Rawlins, Wyo.

**T**HE Rawlins High School Troupe No. 436 enjoyed an active season in dramatics during the 1941-42 school term. Since becoming a member of the national organization in 1941, the Rawlins Troupe has been instrumental in producing twelve one-act plays in addition to the following full-length plays: *Hobgoblin House*, *Death Takes a Holiday*, *Professor How Could You?*, *Ghost Train*, *A Christmas Carol*, and *Through the Keyhole*. The past season came to a close with the production of *A Murder Has Been Arranged* on May 11, 12, with Mr. J. J. Cline directing. Twenty-one students were admitted to Thespian membership.

### Bramwell, W. Va.

**W**HILE no full-length plays were staged by Troupe 137 of the Bramwell High School during the 1941-42 term, the season included the production of several one-act plays. *I shall Be Waiting* was chosen to represent the district at the State Festival held at Morgantown in April. Thespian entertained members of the faculty late in November and observed National Drama Week with a theatre party on February 13. All dramatics and Thespian activities were directed by Miss Shirley Foster.—Myron Taylor, Secretary.

### Newton, Iowa

**M**EMBERS of Thespian Troupe 377 of the Newton High School, with Miss Naomi R. Boslough directing, supplied programs or one-act plays to fourteen town organizations during the 1941-42 season. Two members of the Troupe also appeared in the city's Little Theatre productions. Given as all-school plays were *Tiger House*, in November, and *Little Women*, staged in April as one of the most successful plays of recent years at this school. The one-act, *Jean-Marie*, was given several performances as part of exchange programs.

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## Welch, W. Va.

A PROGRAM of three one-act plays on November 26 opened the 1941-42 season for Thespian Troupe No. 204 of the Welch High School, with Miss Eleanor E. Reed as sponsor. A second evening of one-act plays was given on April 13. The final major play of the year was given by the Senior class on May 27. *Who is Mrs. Chimpie* was the Senior's choice for their class play. Thespians sponsored a performance of Ben Greet Players in *The Merchant of Venice*. The season also included the production of a large number of one-act plays for various school and community projects. Superior rating was received for the Troupe's performance of *Road Into the Sun* given at the district drama festival at Concord State Teachers College on March 28. A series of fifteen programs were given over Station WBRW during the spring semester, with Miss LaNelle Agee as sponsor. The broadcasts were all student-directed. Two initiations were held during the year.—Sue Armentrout, Secretary.

## Ravenswood, W. Va.

DRAMATICS standards took on new meaning at the Ravenswood High School (Troupe No. 253) this past season. Three outstanding major productions were given. *Ice-bound*, given on October 24 by Thespians, opened the season. On December 12, the Junior class followed with a performance of *Growing Pains*. On May 1 the Senior class closed the year with a performance of *Magnificent Obsession*. The year also included the production of several one-act plays. Thespians and members of the graduating class furnished funds for a new cyclorama and other equipment for the auditorium. The Troupe's entry in the district play festival was given superior rating and was later entered in the State Drama Festival at West Virginia University. Credit for the increased interest in dramatics goes to Mrs. J. Wilbur Evans, Troupe Sponsor.—Billy Smith, Secretary.

## Michigan City, Ind.

UNDER the aggressive leadership of Sponsor Mellie Luck, three major plays were given during the 1941-42 season at the Isaac C. Elston High School (Thespian Troupe 91). The first play of the year, *Little Women*, was given by Thespians on October 17. The Junior class play, *June Mad*, followed on November 14. The third play, *Pride and Prejudice*, was staged by the Senior class on May 8. The year also included a large number of one-acts staged for school programs. *Lo, the Gaunt Wolf* was given second place honors in the State Drama Festival held at Terre Haute early in March. Thespian Jean Taylor was chosen as Best Actress. Thespians also entered the first act of *Little Women* in the costume festival held at Whiting late in April. Perhaps the outstanding play of the season was an out-door performance of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* staged by active and alumni members of this troupe in the

International Friendship Garden on July 16, with Miss Luck directing. The performance was highly praised by a large and enthusiastic audience.

## Celina, Ohio

TWENTY-THREE new members were given the Thespian pledge at an impressive ceremony held in the cafeteria of the Celina High School on May 4, with Mrs. Elma G. Hunter as Sponsor. A candlelight ceremony was used. Thespian Kathryn Ann Brandts was chairman for the happy occasion. The season's productions included *Spring Fever*, staged on December 4, 5, by the Juniors, and *Lady, Be Good*, given by the Senior class on April 30 and May 1. Thespians contributed an evening of one-act plays to the year's dramatics program. A fourth major dramatics event, *The Mikado*, was staged by the Music Department on November 3, 4. Activities are already well underway for another busy season.—Jean Baumgardner, Secretary.

## Lindenwood, N. J.

GRADUATING members of Thespian Troupe 453 of the Regional High School have established a Thespian Alumni Organization, with the hope of carrying forward their activities in dramatics. The 1941-42 season at the Regional High School, with Mr. A. W. Muller directing, included the Senior class play, *Here Comes Charlie*, staged on December 11, 12, and the Junior class play, *The Old Crab*, on April 9, 10. The season's activities included the production of an evening of one-act plays early in February.

## Kansas City, Kans.

LAVENDER and *Old Lace*, given by the Senior class of the Rosedale Junior Senior High School (Thespian Troupe 232) on December 5, marked the opening of the 1941-42 season at this school under the direction of Miss Youmans. On December 19 the dramatics club produced *A Christmas Carol* for the benefit of the entire student body. In February the Junior class staged two one-act plays. *He Ain't Done Right By Nell* and *Yellow Roses*. Members of the dramatics club were active in various dramatics projects, making the season one of the most successful in recent years.—Ida G. Riess, Secretary.

## Stambaugh, Mich.

THESPIANS gave the one major play of the season at the Stambaugh High School (Troupe 215) this past year. *Ever Since Eve* was given on December 4. The year also included several one-act plays given for student assembly. On May 1 Thespians entertained members of the Iron Mountain High School Troupe. *Yellow Tulips* and *Christopher's Death* were given as part of the evening's entertainment for the visiting Thespians. The year's activities resulted in nine new members being admitted to membership under the sponsorship of Miss Helen Dunham, director of dramatics.



Cast for the production of *Lena Rivers* at the Biglerville, Pa., High School (Thespian Troupe No. 484). Directed by Mr. George W. Reisinger (extreme left).

THE HIGH SCHOOL THESPIAN

# What's New Among Books and Plays

EDITED BY MRS. HARRISON J. MERRILL

Review Staff: Blandford Jennings, Marion Stuart, Kari Natalie Reed, Elmer S. Crowley, Mary Ella Bovee, Helen Movius, Rachel McCarty, Beulah B. Bayless, H. T. Leeper.

Reviews appearing in this department aim to help our readers keep up with recent books and plays. The opinions expressed are those of the reviewer only. Mention of a book or play in this department does not necessarily mean that such a publication is recommended by THE HIGH SCHOOL THESPIAN.

The John Day Company, 40 East 49th St., New York, N. Y.

*Don Quixote And Sancho*, a dramatization of Cervantes' *Don Quixote*, by Manuel Komroff. In thirteen scenes. 19 m., 12 w., extras. Here is a dramatization which deserves the careful attention of every ambitious director. In its present form the play is more adapted for the library than it is for the stage, but little is required to adapt it for production. Here is a play that will challenge the imagination of high school youngsters; they will find it to their tastes and inclinations. An ideal project for study and for the stage.—*Ernest Bavely*.

Walter H. Baker Company, 178 Tremont St., Boston, Mass.

*Summer Rash*, a comedy in three acts, written by Rowena Blake. 4 m., 6 w. No royalty. This is a hilarious comedy about a girl who wishes to have a part in a play and to have a play that she has written produced. How she pretends to be a movie actress, gets her play produced, and takes part in the play are a few of the thrilling moments in the play. Excellent opportunity for real acting. Youth, charm, comedy, and suspense make this play a fine one for high school.—*Rachel McCarty*.

*Double Date*, a comedy in three acts, by Kurtz Gordon. 7 m., 7 w. Royalty, \$10. The scene of this play is a college fraternity house during the college Winter Carnival. How the prized title, Carnival Queen, is won by the unassuming Jean instead of the grasping Stella makes an interesting study of college students and human nature. The discovery that the quiet Freshman pledge who dates Jean is the Crown Prince incognito adds a very satisfying, if somewhat implausible, climax to Jean's triumph.—*H. T. Leeper*.

*Modern Guidance Plays*, a collection of eight 'teen-age plays dealing with modern, up-to-date problems, by Samuel S. Richmond. Right of performance of any one play is granted by purchase of three copies of the book. Here is an ideal collection of assembly plays that combine good theatre, entertainment, and guidance objectives. Subjects include: importance of leisure-time interest, folly of discourtesy, co-operation, safety, selecting a career, fundamentals of preparing for a life work, working with others, and common sense. Particularly good for junior and senior high school groups. This volume will solve your assembly play problems for a season. Highly recommended.—*Ernest Bavely*.

Row, Peterson and Company, Evanston, Ill.

*Here's How! A Guide to Economy in Stagecraft*, by Herbert Hake. Price, \$1.00. Prof. Hake's book goes a long way in meeting the urgent need for practical, timely material in the field of stagecraft. *Here's How!* has the added virtue of being readable and easily understood, a claim which cannot be made for many other books on the subject. Illustrations are clear and well marked. Every aspect of stagecraft, from designing the set to lighting and sound effects, is competently discussed. This book truly deserves a place on the desk of every teacher whose duties include the production of plays.—*Ernest Bavely*.

*Sky Road*, a comedy in three acts, by N. Richard Nusbaum. 6 m., 9 w. Percentage royalty. All the action takes place in the air stewardess lounge at Commercial Air Field. A story of loves and fears when the idea of air

hostesses was comparatively new. The plot develops into several emotional and dramatic scenes. A missing millionaire pilot and a flight for a specialist doctor lead to the climax.—*Harley Fortier*.

Eldridge Entertainment House, Franklin, O.

*Atta Boy, Walt!*, a comedy in three acts, by Bettye Knapp. 5 m., 4 w. No royalty for two performances. Here is your answer for a Freshman or Sophomore play in which young high school students act themselves. The action all occurs in Walt's shack behind his home where he has installed a signalling light. How he traps an escaped convict, exposes the high school playboy, and wins back his girl friend, make exciting and highly amusing drama.—*Lotta June Merrill*.

*Moonlight and Applesauce*, a comedy in three acts, by John Nash. 6 m., 7 w. No royalty for two performances. This is a gay comedy dealing with youthful romances, family investments, and a bit of amateur sleuthing. The dialogue is fast-moving and sits easily upon the tongue. Clearly drawn characters and plenty of action combine to make this a good choice for Thespians.—*Lotta June Merrill*.

*Bread and Butter*, a comedy in three acts, by William Ellis Jones. 7 m., 7 w., extras. No royalty for two performances. If you have a strong girl lead who is as glamorous as Lynn Fontanne and can dance like Ginger Rogers, here is your show. It's the story of a down-and-out show girl replacing a spinster poet in a lecture before a small town literary society. Characters and situations are amusing and well within the capacities of mature high school groups.—*Lotta June Merrill*.

Dramatists Play Service, 6 East 39th St., New York, N. Y.

*Heaven Can Wait*, a comedy-fantasy in three acts, by Harry Segall. (Play on which motion picture, *Here Comes Mr. Jordan* was based.) 12 m., 6 w., extras. Royalty, \$25. This is an unusual play about a prize fighter whose spirit is prematurely separated from his body. Vigorously protesting that his time is not up, he is permitted to return to earth, where he inhabits first the body of a murdered banker, and finally acquires the body of the world champion boxer. Advanced high school groups will find this play excellent fun as the situations are different and the dialogue convincing. Light swearing may be cut. The main setting and two scenes offer no special problem.—*Elmer S. Crowley*.

*The Last Word In Makeup*, by Dr. Rudolph G. Liszt. Price, \$1.65. This up-to-date book is well organized and follows makeup through the first simple steps to the more advanced stages of special effects, makeup for television, movies, and color photography. Special section on street makeup also included. The 45 unretouched photographs, 80 illustrations, and clear explanations make this an ideal source book.—*Elmer S. Crowley*.

Samuel French, 25 West 45th St., New York, New York.

*The Black Hawk*, a mystery drama in three acts, by James Reach. 7 m., 7 w. Royalty, \$10. This play presents something above mediocre in plays of its type. The plot concerns one Judson Delroy, a famous scientist, who has been threatened with death unless he divulges his formula for explosives to the Black Hawk. A well-written script containing suspense and myste-

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VICTORIA: Wait a moment, Anne. You mustn't go without your pearls.

ANNE: It's all right, Victoria. If you want them, keep them.

VICTORIA: No, no. Rip wants you to have them. Come in. (Anne enters reluctantly. Victoria locks the door behind her.)

ANNE: (Frightened) What . . . ?

VICTORIA: I'm going to show you my treasure room. (She goes up to the panel and touches the hidden spring. The section of wall moves slowly out revealing the steel door . . . the steel door swings slowly open showing the darkness beyond.)

ANNE: Oh! . . . What . . . ?

VICTORIA: (Holding out her hand to Anne.) Rip wants you to have your pearls. Come . . .

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**Murder Mansion**, a mystery comedy in three acts, by Orville Snapp. 4 m., 6 w. Royalty, \$10. This is a play about the young Carolotta who, upon the death of her uncle, has inherited a lonely old mansion off the coast of Maine. She and her colored maid arrive to take possession of the old home only to learn that her uncle's death was unnatural and that her place has been named "murder mansion" by the neighbors. Humorous lines, farcical situations.—*Marion Stuart.*

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Longmans, Green and Company, 55 Fifth Ave., New York, N. Y.

**Maid's Night Out**, a comedy in three acts, dramatized from the motion picture of the same name, by William Thorpe. 6 m., 5 w., extras. Royalty, \$25. This is a cleverly written play about a rich and bold young man who accepts a job as milkman in his father's million-dollar dairy in order that he may win a bet and the girl he loves. Fast-moving scenes, good dialogue, and wholesome comedy make this an excellent choice for advanced high school groups. May require judicious cutting here and there. Calls for several scenes but is relatively easy to stage.—*Ernest Bavely.*

F. S. Crofts and Company, New York, N. Y.

**Designing The Play**, by Chas. W. Cooper and Paul A. Camp. This is a workbook for dramatic production, containing brief essays on certain problems of play production, with 48 assignments and 30 worksheet forms, to be used as a text or as supplementary material in a play production course. It is equally valuable to the director who wishes to work out carefully his own choice of play for presentation; and more especially is it valuable to that inexperienced director who finds himself suddenly faced with the necessity of putting over a good play. The use of this book would also make an interesting project for a dramatic club, Little Theatre, or English class. It contains a wealth of fundamental facts, set down in a comprehensible, simple manner by men who know their theatre. (Paul A. Camp sponsors Troupe No. 490 at Long Beach, Calif.).—*Mary Ella Bovee.*

The Dramatic Publishing Co., 59 East Van Buren St., Chicago, Ill.

**The Miser**, a three-act comedy, arranged and adapted from Moliere's play, by Walter F. Kerr. 7 m., 6 w. Non-royalty. The Dramatic Publishing Company and Mr. Kerr deserve high praise for this excellent adaptation of Moliere's classic comedy. It is ideally suited to the needs of the high school theatre, it gives the director a wide range of opportunities in the field of production, and it offers a challenge to students in acting and character portrayal. The parts are all excellent for the average high school cast, the dialogue is of the very best, the story is full of action and fun, and the staging is relatively simple. A grand play every high school should stage sooner or later.—*Ernest Bavely.*

World Book Company, Yonkers-on-Hudson, New York.

**Shakespeare For Today**, edited by Leroy Phillips and Mary Major Crawford, with a foreword by Ida A. Jewett. 464 pages. Price, \$1.52. This book presents adaptations for the high school stage of five of Shakespeare's plays: *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *As You Like It*, *Julius Caesar*, and *Macbeth*. In offering these plays for production at the secondary school level, the editors have wisely streamlined the language, thereby making the text easily understood and free of obscure words and passages. This has been accomplished with little injury to the story. The editors have, as another aid in staging, included an abundance of stage directions and business. This writer has long advocated the presentation of at least one classic play a year by high schools, given purely as an educational and cultural project. This book offers five of Shakespeare's great plays in style truly fitting for such an undertaking. In their present form, these plays make ideal reading for high school dramatics students. The desire and will to stage them will follow naturally once the dramatic possibilities are realized by both the students and the director. This reviewer recommends *Shakespeare For Today* to all ambitious dramatics directors.—*Ernest Bavely.*

Northwestern Press, 2200 Park Ave., Minneapolis, Minn.

**New Shoes**, a comedy in three acts, by Richard Adams. 5 m., 5 w. Royalty, \$10. The Dobbs Shoe Factory has been closed for some time, much to the town's detriment, and everyone expects great things to happen when the Dobbs heir arrives. Elmer, the heir, a simple, unassuming chap, disappoints them all by saying it is against his principles to accept property he did not earn. But in the end, Elmer justifies all their hopes. He decides his responsibilities as owner outweigh his scruples, gets the factory operating again better than ever, saves everyone from the town Shylock, and, of course, wins the right girl. An interesting play offering no particular difficulty for high school groups.—*H. T. Leeper.*

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